

PROTOCOL FOR PROCUREMENT OF ALL SERVICES

Version 1

Definitions	
Officer(s)	means the Officer identified by the Council with the relevant competencies, experience and expertise to procure services on behalf of the Council.
Contractor(s)	means organisations, businesses, individuals, suppliers, providers, contractors and partners that provide services for the Council.
SSIP	means Safety Schemes in Procurement Forum (SSIP) which is the Health & Safety standard required for all Contractors that provide works or services for the Council that may have an effect on our employees, residents, clients and customers.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council requires a consistent approach to procurement for all service contracts to ensure that all health & safety and legal requirements are considered and risks are identified and managed appropriately.
- 1.2 This protocol applies to Council employees who engage or work with Contractors or service providers whose work can adversely affect the health and wellbeing of people or the environment.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This protocol will apply to all service contracts including but not limited to services for construction, arboriculture, grounds maintenance, professional services, and ICT.
- 2.2 Specific considerations and processes applicable to Construction Works, ICT Procurements and Forestry and Grounds Maintenance Works are detailed in the Protocol for Procurement of All Works and Construction Related Activity, Protocol for ICT Procurement and Protocol for Forestry and Grounds Maintenance Works, attached as appendices.

3. In-house Provision

- 3.1 For works or services that can be delivered by in-house services (including but not limited to printing, catering, construction, design, communications, ICT) orders will be placed with the in-house provider. Should the in-house service not be able to produce the work/deliver the service or agreement cannot be reached about price or other terms, then the in-house team shall advise on technical specifications.
- 3.2 It is acknowledged, however, that competitive tenders will continue to be obtained where the contract is let under external funding regimes and a condition of the funding is that tenders are sought.

4. Health & Safety Standards

- 4.1 The Officer **MUST** undertake a risk assessment to identify the Health & Safety risks associated with the procurement of the contract.
- 4.2 The Officer must refer to the Health & Safety guidance available on the intranet to determine if the contract is deemed to be high risk and follow the relevant procedures: -
- LCS-HS-89 Assessment, Engagement and Management of Contractors
 - LCS-HS-98 Contractors Health & Safety Standards
 - LCS-HS-18 Construction (Design Management)
- 4.3 Where a contract is deemed to be high risk in terms of Health and Safety, the Officer **MUST** ensure that ALL organisations invited to tender / quote for the contract have a Safety Schemes in Procurement (SSIP) accreditation relevant to the contract they are being asked to deliver.
- 4.4 If the requirement is for a construction works contract the Contractor will also be required to be registered with Constructionline. Please refer to the Protocol for Construction Procurement (Issue 2) for further details.
- 4.5 The Council has provided for guidance a list of works and service contracts which are deemed to be high risk as regards Health & Safety as detailed within LCS-HS-89 Assessment, Engagement and Management of Contractors. The Officer is responsible for ensuring that the relevant Health & Safety standards are met.
- 4.6 This list is not exhaustive and the Officer **MUST** seek advice from the Council's Health & Safety Manager if the relevant works or service is not listed.
- 4.7 It is accepted that not all Contractors working on behalf of the Council will have an SSIP assessment from the outset, and Officers should discuss with a Health and Safety Officer what reasonable, auditable,

steps are required to establish the health and safety credentials of Contractors who carry out work on behalf of Gateshead Council or any of its partners using LCS-HS-89 Assessment, Engagement and Management of Contractors until such time that they become SSIP registered.

- 4.8 Further information regarding SSIP, how companies can apply for an assessment and the list of SSIP Forum member organisations, can be found on the SSIP website: www.ssi.org.uk
- 4.9 Further advice on risk assessments or other health and safety matters for all contracts can be obtained from the Occupational Health and Safety Team by email to:-
[CS HR Health & Safety](#)

5. Process for Selection of organisations to be Invited to Tender / Quote

- 5.1 Where contracts have already been put in place, Officers are required to utilise the existing arrangements as directed by the Service Director, Corporate Commissioning & Procurement, or the organisation that let the original contract. Please refer to the table below for further details on the quotation and tendering thresholds and procedures.

Value	Who	Procedure	Approval Required
Below £5,000	Officers within Services	Be able to demonstrate value for money	No
Between £5,000 and £25,000	Officers within Services	Obtain at least 4 quotations (2 local) via the NEPO Portal	No
Between £25,000 and £50,000	Officers within Services/Corporate Commissioning and Procurement	Obtain at least 4 quotations (2 local) via the NEPO Portal	Process and documentation must be approved by Service Director, Corporate Commissioning and Procurement
Between £50,000 and EU threshold	Corporate Commissioning and Procurement	Tender process required	Process and documentation must be undertaken by Service Director, Corporate Commissioning and Procurement
Over EU threshold	Corporate Commissioning and Procurement	EU compliant tender process required	Process and documentation must be undertaken by Service Director, Corporate Commissioning and Procurement

- 5.2 The Officer **MUST** undertake a risk assessment to identify any other risks associated with the procurement.
- 5.3 Regardless of value the Officer **MUST** ensure that all other relevant corporate requirements for the delivery of the contract are met i.e.:-
- Compliance with the specification/service brief
 - Disclosure and Barring Service (where appropriate)
 - Economic, environmental and social considerations to comply with the Social Value Act 2012
 - Equality and diversity
 - Financial
 - Health impact assessment
 - Industry accreditations
 - Method statements detailing the procedures to be followed
 - Risk assessments specifically relating to the service being delivered
 - Safeguarding for adults and/or children (where appropriate)
 - All other criteria relevant to the service to be provided

Please note the above list is not exhaustive.

- 5.4 Further guidance on contract considerations can be obtained from the Corporate Commissioning & Procurement Team by email to:-
[CS Corporate Procurement New Requests](#)
- 5.5 The Officer **MUST** ensure that the procurement process is carried out in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules in a fair, consistent and transparent manner.
- 5.6 All tender / quotation activity must be facilitated via the NEPO Portal in accordance with the Constitution. If you require training on the NEPO Portal please email: -
[CS Corporate Procurement New Requests](#)
- 5.7 All Contractors to be invited to quote/tender must be registered on the NEPO Portal at www.nepoportal.org
- 5.8 Where the Council has a single requirement, the value of spend for similar works or services must be aggregated. The Officer must not deliberately split contracts to avoid application of the Contract Procedure Rules.

6. Removal/Suspension of Contractors from all Council systems

- 6.1 Following concerns over working practices, quality of work or other major issues over the performance of a Contractor, the Officer should raise their concerns in writing with the Service Director, Corporate Commissioning and Procurement who will organise for the allegations to be investigated. Upon conclusion of the investigation, and following

consultation with the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance, and/or Strategic Director, Corporate Resources, the Service Director Corporate Commissioning and Procurement may organise for the Contractor to be temporarily suspended from all of the Council's systems, or organise other appropriate actions.

- 6.2 It is the responsibility of the Service Director, Corporate Commissioning and Procurement to inform in writing, other appropriate Officers within the Council of any such action and provide guidance as to what other steps might be necessary, depending upon the specific circumstances.

7.0 Ordering Process

- 7.1 In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations official orders must be placed for all works or services to be supplied to the Council except for utility services or any other exceptions approved by the Strategic Director, Corporate Resources.
- 7.2 The NEPO Portal reference number for the quote/tender must be entered in the product description on all orders as the first ten characters. This must be followed by a description of the works or services being provided.
- 7.3 Any other relevant documentation should be attached to the order for audit purposes.

8. Data Collection

- 8.1 Details of quotation/tender/order processes undertaken, by whom and for what, together with details of the winning bidder must be kept for the relevant amount of time (i.e. 6 years for signed under hand and 12 years for signed under seal or as set out in any grant funding requirements).
- 8.2 This information will be used for audit purposes.
- 8.3 If you have any questions regarding this procurement protocol please contact Corporate Commissioning & Procurement by email to:-
[CS Corporate Procurement New Requests](#)

**ANNEX 1 - PROTOCOL FOR PROCUREMENT OF ALL WORKS AND CONSTRUCTION
RELATED ACTIVITY**

Version 3

Definitions	
Construction Works	Means carrying out any building, civil engineering or engineering construction work or services as set out in the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 and detailed in the scope below
Contractor(s)	Means organisations, businesses, individuals, suppliers, contractors, providers and partners that provide works and services for Gateshead Council or its partners
SSIP	Means Safety Schemes in Procurement Forum (SSIP) which is the Health and Safety standard required for all Contractors that provide works or services for Gateshead Council or its partners that may have an effect on employees, residents, clients and customers
Standing List	Means the Council's list of Contractors and sub-contractors who are registered with Constructionline and are a member of a SSIP registered organisation

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council requires a consistent approach to the procurement of all works and construction related activity to ensure that appropriate assessments of all organisations carrying out work on our behalf.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This protocol covers all construction works and the carrying out of any building, civil engineering or engineering construction work or activity

set out in the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015, and includes:

- (a) *the construction, alteration, conversion, fitting out, commissioning, renovation, repair, upkeep, redecoration or other maintenance (including cleaning which involves the use of water or an abrasive at high pressure, or the use of corrosive or toxic substances), de-commissioning, demolition or dismantling of a structure;*
- (b) *the preparation for an intended structure, including site clearance, exploration, investigation (but not site survey) and excavation (but not pre-construction archaeological investigations), and the clearance or preparation of the site or structure for use or occupation at its conclusion;*
- (c) *the assembly on site of prefabricated elements to form a structure or the disassembly on site of the prefabricated elements which, immediately before such disassembly, formed a structure;*
- (d) *the removal of a structure, or of any product or waste resulting from demolition or dismantling of a structure, or from disassembly of prefabricated elements which immediately before such disassembly formed such a structure;*
- (e) *the installation, commissioning, maintenance, repair or removal of mechanical, electrical, gas, compressed air, hydraulic, telecommunications, computer or similar services which are normally fixed within or to a structure.*

3. In-house Service Provision

- 3.1 For works or services that can be delivered by in-house services (including but not limited to, construction and design) orders will be placed with the in-house provider. Should the in-house service not be able to produce the work/deliver the service or agreement cannot be reached about price or other terms, then they shall advise on technical specifications.
- 3.2 In accordance with previously agreed thresholds, all construction works valued below £3M will be offered to Construction Services for negotiation.
- 3.3 If Construction Services decline the offer to negotiate, or do not offer value for money, and the construction work is valued at less than the EU threshold, this protocol will be applied. For all construction work subcontracted by Construction Services or any other service that is valued at less than the EU threshold, this protocol will be applied.

- 3.4 It is acknowledged that competitive tenders will continue to be obtained where the construction work is let under external funding regimes and a condition of the funding is that tenders are sought.

4. Access to Construction Provision

4.1 Only Officers who have the relevant competency and expertise in relation to construction can procure construction works on behalf of the Council.

4.2 In order to access construction provision the following process applies:

- For general construction activities (including repairs and maintenance), please contact Michael Crinnion (Commercial Manager) at Construction Services, michaelcrinnion@gateshead.gov.uk
- For procurement of demolitions, please contact John Mathie (Design Manager) at Council Housing, Design and Technical Services, johnmathie@gateshead.gov.uk
- For the preparation of architectural and building services designs, please contact John Mathie (Design Manager) at Council Housing, Design and Technical Services, johnmathie@gateshead.gov.uk
- For the preparation of highways and engineering designs, please contact Trevor Waggett (Engineering Manager) at Development, Transport and Public Protection, trevorwaggett@gateshead.gov.uk
- For all other queries, or to access to external providers please contact Sue Longstaff at Corporate Commissioning and Procurement, suelongstaff@gateshead.gov.uk

5. 'Standing List'

5.1 With effect from 1st April 2014 the Council adopted a Standing List of Construction Contractors and Sub-contractors which MUST be used for all construction related activity as follows:

- 5.1.1 The 'Standing List' is to be used for **all** under EU threshold construction procurements unless the construction work is carried out internally.
- 5.1.2 The Council and TGHC reserve the right not to use the 'Standing List' if an alternative framework arrangement exists and is more appropriate and relevant.
- 5.1.3 The 'Standing List' covers a number of construction work categories as detailed on Constructionline to ensure that the

Contractors who are being invited to tender / quote are able to undertake the work required.

- 5.1.4 Contractors must be registered on the NEPO Portal to apply for inclusion on the 'Standing List'.
- 5.1.5 To be considered for inclusion on the 'Standing List' Contractors **must** be registered on Constructionline.
- 5.1.6 To be considered for inclusion on the 'Standing List' Contractors **must** be a member of anSSIP registered body. Any exception to this must be approved by the Council's Health and Safety Manager.
- 5.1.7 Engagement of Specialist Contractors may occur outside of this protocol, and may be exempt from points 5.1.5 and 5.1.6 above but they may be subject to specific industry accreditations and also must be approved by the Council's Health and Safety Manager. Specialist Contractors that are exempt from points 5.1.5 and 5.1.6 may be given an appropriate period of time to obtain third party assessment to comply with points 5.1.5 and/or 5.1.6 above as appropriate and if they fail to do so they will be removed from the Standing List.
- 5.1.8 The 'Standing List' is centrally managed by Corporate Procurement in line with the consolidated procurement principles.
- 5.1.9 The 'Standing List' is hosted as a bespoke list on an appropriate system (currently Constructionline) as approved by the Service Director of Corporate Commissioning and Procurement.
- 5.1.10 Financial notation values are set for Contractors for each works category in which they are registered on Constructionline. This value will be used to determine whether the Contractor has the relevant 'contract value' threshold to be selected to be included in the invitation to tender / quote for a specific project/scheme.
 - i. The 'Standing List' will allow the addition of new Contractors who meet the criteria throughout its lifetime. This process will be managed by Corporate Commissioning and Procurement.

6. Removal/Suspension of Contractors from the Standing List

- 6.1 In the event that a Contractor is no longer registered on Constructionline, they will be suspended from the Standing List and should not be included in any invitation to tender / quote until such time as they become re-registered on Constructionline and subsequently re-instated on the Standing List.

- 6.2 In the event that a Contractor is no longer a member of a SSIP registered body, they will be suspended from the Standing List and should not be included in any invitation to tender / quote until such time as they renew their membership with a SSIP registered body and are subsequently re-instated on the Standing List. Any exception to this must be approved by the Council's Health and Safety Manager.
- 6.3 Following concerns over working practices or quality of work identified by Health and Safety, Construction Services, Council Housing or Design and Technical Services, the Service Director Corporate Commissioning and Procurement must be informed and the Contractors may be suspended from the Standing List and should not be included in any invitation to tender / quote until such time as corrective measures are put in place and they are subsequently re-instated on the Standing List.

7. Process for Selection of Companies to be Invited to Tender / Quote

- 7.1 A minimum of 4 companies from the 'Standing List' who are registered in the work category relevant to the project / scheme should be invited to tender /quote in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. This must include a minimum of 2 local companies if there are at least 2 local companies included in the relevant work category.
- 7.2 Contractors to be invited to tender / quote MUST be selected on a random selection basis using the bespoke list hosted on Constructionline.
- 7.3 Construction Services will also be invited to tender / quote, unless this is not appropriate.
- 7.4 The Contractor who was the winning bidder from the previous tender / quotation process in that work category may also be invited to tender / quote in addition to those who have been randomly selected.
- 7.5 Additional Contractors from the 'Standing List' who are registered in the relevant work category can be manually selected and also invited to tender / quote in addition to those stated in points 7.1 – 7.4 above at the discretion of the Service Director requiring the construction works to be carried out.
- 7.6 PLEASE NOTE: If any specific selection criteria in addition to the relevant work category is set for the random selection of the companies to be invited to tender / quote i.e. contract value (notation value), relevant industrial accreditations etc, any Contractor who is manually selected to be invited to tender / quote as detailed in points 7.4 and 7.5 above MUST be able to meet the same criteria. If not, they cannot be added to the invitation to tender / quote.

8. Tender / Quotation Process

- 8.1 All tender / quotation activity over £5,000 **must** be facilitated via the NEPO Portal.
- 8.2 The NEPO Regional Framework for Construction Works should be used for tender activity over the EU threshold unless the Service Director, Corporate Commissioning and Procurement is satisfied that another procurement route is more appropriate.

9. Data Collection

- 9.1 Details of what has been tendered, by whom and for what, together with details of the winning bidder must be kept for the relevant amount of time (i.e. 6 years for signed under hand and 12 years for signed under seal or as set out in any grant funding requirements)
- 9.2 The information held on the hosting system will be used to inform the next tender/ quotation process.
- 9.3 This information will be used for audit purposes.

10. Additional Information

- 10.1 It should be noted that prior to **any** construction work taking place on any Council owned or leased in property, Landlords Consent must firstly be obtained.

For further information on Landlords Consent for all properties (excluding schools) please contact lesleypringle@gateshead.gov.uk

For further information on Landlords Consent for schools please contact sandrawatson@gateshead.gov.uk

- 10.2 It should be noted that when engaging any external Contractor, Officers **MUST** comply with the information contained within the 'Assessment, Engagement and Management of Contractors' document which is available on the intranet (document ref LCS-HS-89)
<http://council/humanresources/healthandsafety/handbook.htm>

ANNEX 2 - Protocol for Procurement of ICT Products and Services

Version 2

Definitions	
Officer(s)	means the Officer identified by the Council with the relevant competencies, experience and expertise to procure services on behalf of the Council.
Contractor(s)	means organisations, businesses, individuals, suppliers, providers, resellers, contractors and partners that provide works and services for Gateshead Council.
ICT Procurement	means all ICT contracts.
Web and Digital	means the Web Team located within Policy, Transformation and Communications. Further guidance on web and digital considerations can be obtained from the Web Team by email to: Webteam@gateshead.gov.uk
Web and Digital Activity	means all public and internal web interfaces regardless of whether they are hosted in-house or by a third party.
Change Advisory Board (CAB)	means the Board that reviews all new work requests or changes for ICT Services

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council requires a consistent approach to procurement for all ICT contracts to ensure that all corporate and legal requirements are considered and risks are identified and managed appropriately and ICT procurements are compliant with Council and government requirements.
- 1.1 This protocol must be read in conjunction with the Council's Protocol for the Procurement of all Services.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This protocol will cover the procurement of all ICT contracts, including, but not restricted to:
 - Business Applications (including externally hosted systems)
 - Hardware (including externally hosted systems, Cloud)
 - Network connectivity services (including telephone landlines, mobile contracts and data circuits etc.)

- Software (including freeware, shareware, Open Source)
- Services that support the core infrastructure, including desktop devices, laptops, printers and other peripheral devices that are connected to the Council's network)
- Networking equipment and cables
- Web & Digital - all public and internal interfaces regardless of whether they are hosted in-house or by a third party.

3. In-house service provision

- 3.1 For works or services that can be delivered by in-house services (including but not limited to printing, design, web and digital team, or ICT) orders will be placed with the in-house provider. Should the in-house service not be able to produce the work/deliver the service or agreement cannot be reached about price or other terms, then they shall advise on technical specifications.
- 3.2 It is acknowledged, however that competitive tenders will continue to be obtained where the work is let under external funding regimes and a condition of the funding is that tenders are sought.

4. Corporate ICT Requirements

- 4.1 Irrespective of value, all ICT equipment, hardware, software and services that support the core infrastructure (including desktop devices, laptops, mobile devices, printers and other peripheral devices that are connected to the Council's network) and are used for Council business purposes must be authorised by ICT services. This will ensure that they meet the Council's standards, comply with licensing legislation, are security asset tagged and entered into the Council's ICT Asset Register.
- 4.2 The procurement of the above will take place either via ICT Services or Corporate Commissioning and Procurement. ICT Services may utilise existing ICT Framework arrangements, providing these frameworks offer value for money and have been let in such a way that allow the Council to utilise them. If there is no appropriate framework arrangement in place the request will be forwarded to Corporate Commissioning and Procurement to undertake an external procurement.

5. Groups and Services Requirements

- 5.1 Irrespective of value, all new ICT business applications or software to be used for council business purposes, and upgrades or additional modules to existing applications, must be requested and approved by ICT Services. The requirements will be assessed by the ICT Change Advisory Board (CAB) as part of the formal change management programme.

- 5.2 If the requirements and associated services can be fulfilled either by ICT Services, the Web and Digital Team or an existing solution, within the timescales required, the change request will be accepted and the work prioritised and scheduled into the ICT Work Programme.

6. External Procurements

- 6.1 If ICT Services or the Web and Digital Team cannot fulfil requirements, and there is no other existing solution, the service will be referred to Corporate Commissioning and Procurement. If an external procurement is required the process set out in the Protocol for Procurement of all Services and Council's Contract Procedure Rules MUST be followed.
- 6.1 Where an existing solution is already in place ICT Services will request Corporate Commissioning and Procurement to review the legal agreement to ensure any required updates/upgrades/extensions to the solution are permitted within the current agreement, Where the agreement is not sufficient to update/upgrade/extend the solution a procurement process may be required.

7 Development of Specification of Requirements

- 7.1 A specification template together with guidance notes is available to assist with the development of the specification by the service.
- 7.2 ICT Services and Web and Digital will provide technical advice and guidance in relation to the specification of requirements and the procurement process to ensure the security and technical implications are fully assessed once the initial draft specification has been developed by the service. All recommendations made by ICT Services and the Web and Digital Team should be addressed prior to publication of the tender documentation. Technical advice may be provided by a 3rd party should ICT Services and / or Web and Digital think this will provide the best outcome for the Council. Corporate Commissioning and Procurement will provide assistance in capturing the information on specification template if required by the Service

8 Security and Technical Documentation

- 8.1 ICT Services and the Web and Digital Team are responsible for the design and control of the security and technical documentation (in the form of questionnaires) sent to contractors to complete as part of their response. They will undertake the review of the completed questionnaires when returned.
- 8.2 ICT Services and the Web and Digital Team will provide guidance to the Procurement Officer about what should be included for each procurement to ensure inclusion of appropriate technical / security requirements.

9 Information Governance

- 9.1 Services must produce an initial classification of the data that will be held on the system and this will be used in the procurement to determine whether the systems are appropriately secured, data protection requirements are being met, business continuity arrangements are adequate and data ownership at the end of the contract is clarified. The completed data classification must be based on the classifications included in the ICT Security Policy and within the guidance notes.

10. Implementation

- 10.1 When the procurement is completed, a request must be raised by the Service with ICT Services and/or Web & Digital Team to assist with the implementation of the chosen solution.

11. ICT Change Advisory Board and Change Management Process

- 11.1 All ICT new work requests and requests for change should be submitted to the ICT Change Advisory Board (CAB) using the Work Request Form available via AssystNet: [AssystNET Work/Change Request](#)
- 11.2 If the work request/request for change is approved, the project will be allocated to appropriate teams in ICT Services and Web & Digital.
- 11.3 Further information is available from Julie Gallagher, ICT Manager.

12. Web and Digital

- 12.1 Includes all public and internal web interfaces regardless of whether they are hosted in-house or by a third party.
- 12.2 The Web and Digital Team must provide advice throughout the procurement process by helping to scope requirements, providing minimum standards that will feed into the technical specification and participating in any tender evaluation.
- 12.3 Wherever possible existing systems should be deployed to deliver the required solution.
- 12.4 The Web Team are located within Policy, Transformation and Communications. Further guidance on web and digital considerations can be obtained from the Web Team by email to: WebTeam@Gateshead.Gov.UK

ANNEX 3 - PROTOCOL FOR FORESTRY AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE WORKS

Version 1

Definitions	
Forestry and Grounds Maintenance Works	<p>Means:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural Path Construction and Maintenance • Rural Fencing – including timber and wire fencing • Tree Work – including felling, thinning and planting • Agricultural Work - including grass cutting, strimming, baling and seeding, schools grounds maintenance • General Conservation Work - including boardwalks, digging ponds & ditches, construction of steps etc. • Ecological Consultant Work - including wildlife surveys • Sport Pitch Marking
Contractor(s)	Means organisations, businesses, individuals, suppliers, contractors, providers and partners that provide works and services for Gateshead Council or its partners
SSIP	Means Safety Schemes in Procurement Forum (SSIP) which is the Health and Safety standard required for all Contractors that provide works or services for Gateshead Council or its partners that may have an effect on employees, residents, clients and customers
Standing List	Means the Council's list of Contractors and sub-contractors who are a member of a SSIP registered organisation.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council requires a consistent approach to the procurement of all forestry and grounds maintenance related activity to ensure that appropriate assessments have been undertaken for all organisations carrying out these works/services on our behalf.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This protocol covers the following categories of work:-

- Rural Path Construction and Maintenance
- Rural Fencing – including timber and wire fencing
- Tree Work – including felling, thinning and planting
- Agricultural Work - including grass cutting, strimming, baling and seeding, schools grounds maintenance
- General Conservation Work - including boardwalks, digging ponds & ditches, construction of steps etc.
- Ecological Consultant Work - including wildlife surveys
- Sport Pitch Marking

3. In-house Service Provision

- 3.1 For works or services that can be delivered by in-house services (including but not limited to, grounds maintenance, construction, design,) orders will be placed with the in-house provider. Should the in-house service not be able to produce the work/deliver the service, or agreement cannot be reached about price or other terms, then they shall advise on technical specifications.
- 3.4 For all forestry and grounds maintenance work/services that are valued at less than the EU threshold, this protocol will be applied.
- 3.5 It is acknowledged that competitive tenders will continue to be obtained where the forestry and grounds maintenance work/service is let under external funding regimes and a condition of the funding is that tenders are sought.

4. Access to Forestry and Grounds Maintenance Provision

- 4.1 **Only Officers who have the relevant competency and expertise in relation to forestry and grounds maintenance can procure these works/services on behalf of the Council.**

4.2 In order to access forestry and grounds maintenance provision the following process applies:

- For all arboriculture works (i.e., tree felling) please contact arburrequests@gateshead.gov.uk or wasteservicesandgroundsmaintenance@gateshead.gov.uk
- For all queries relating to Health and Safety please contact CShalthandsafety@gateshead.gov.uk
- For all other queries, or to access external providers please contact Shaun Naylor at Corporate Commissioning and Procurement, shaunnaylor@gateshead.gov.uk

5. 'Standing List'

5.1 With effect from 1st April 2016 the Council adopted a Standing List for Forestry and Grounds Maintenance works/services which **MUST** be used for all related activity as follows:

- 5.1.1 The 'Standing List' covers the categories of works/services detailed above to ensure that the Contractors who are being invited to tender / quote are able to undertake the work required:
- 5.1.2 Contractors must be registered on the NEPO Portal to apply for inclusion on the 'Standing List'.
- 5.1.3 To be considered for inclusion on the 'Standing List' Contractors **must** be a member of aSSIP registered body. Any exception to this must be approved by the Council's Health and Safety Manager.
- 5.1.4 Engagement of Specialist Contractors may occur outside this protocol, and may be exempt from point 5.1.3 above but they may be subject to specific industry accreditations and also must be approved by the Council's Health and Safety Manager. Specialist Contractors that are exempt from point 5.1.3 may be given an appropriate period of time to obtain third party assessment to comply with point 5.1.3 above as appropriate and if they fail to do so they will be removed from the Standing List.
- 5.1.5 The 'Standing List' is centrally managed by Corporate Commissioning and Procurement in line with the consolidated procurement principles.
- 5.1.6 The 'Standing List' will allow the addition of new Contractors who meet the criteria throughout its lifetime. This process will be managed by Corporate Commissioning and Procurement.

6. Removal/Suspension of Contractors from the Standing List

- 6.2 In the event that a Contractor is no longer a member of a SSIP registered body, they will be suspended from the Standing List and should not be included in any invitation to tender / quote until such time as they renew their membership with a SSIP registered body and are subsequently re-instated on the Standing List. Any exception to this must be approved by the Council's Health and Safety Manager.
- 6.3 Following concerns over working practices or quality of work identified by Health and Safety or Waste Services and Grounds Maintenance, the Service Director Corporate Commissioning and Procurement must be informed and the Contractors may be suspended from the Standing List and should not be included in any invitation to tender / quote until such time as corrective measures are put in place and they are subsequently re-instated on the Standing List.

7. Process for Selection of Companies

- 7.1 All Contractors who are registered on the 'Standing List' in the work category relevant to the project / scheme should be invited to tender / quote.

8. Tender / Quotation Process

- 8.1 All tender / quotation activity over £5,000 **must** be facilitated via the NEPO Portal.

9. Data Collection

- 9.1 Details of what has been tendered, by whom and for what, together with details of the winning bidder must be kept for the relevant amount of time (i.e. 6 years for signed under hand and 12 years for signed under seal or as set out in any grant funding requirements)
- 9.2 The information held on the hosting system will be used to inform the next tender/ quotation process.
- 9.3 This information will be used for audit purposes.

10. Additional Information

- 10.1 It should be noted that prior to any forestry and grounds maintenance works/services taking place on any Council owned or leased in property, Landlords Consent may be required and further guidance should be sought.

For further information on Landlords Consent for all properties (excluding schools) please contact lesleypringle@gateshead.gov.uk

For further information on Landlords Consent for schools please contact sandrawatson@gateshead.gov.uk

- 10.2 It should be noted that when engaging any external Contractor, Officers **MUST** comply with the information contained within the 'Assessment, Engagement and Management of Contractors' document which is available on the intranet (document ref LCS-HS-89)
<http://council/humanresources/healthandsafety/handbook.htm>