



# **Procurement**

# **Policy**

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Document Control Sheet

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This policy was screened on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2010 in accordance with the requirements of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and has been proofed for Human Rights compliance.

This documentation can be made available in alternative formats such as large print, Braille, disk, audio tape, an ethnic-minority language or Irish/Ulster Scots upon request. Requests for alternative formats can be made to the Probation Board using the following contact information:

Equality & Recruitment Manager  
Probation Board for Northern Ireland  
Human Resources,  
Unit 5 Antrim Technology Park  
BT41 1QS

Telephone number: 028 90262400.  
Fax No: 028 902624310  
Textphone: 028 90262490  
E-mail [recruitment@pbni.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@pbni.gsi.gov.uk)

# Procurement Policy

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## **1. Application of Policy**

The Board has a wide range of policies which may apply to different categories of people.

An employee is any person under a current contract of employment with PBNI, including temporary and fixed term contracts.

An agency worker is any person supplied to work with PBNI through an employment agency.

A secondee is any person working with PBNI under a formal secondment agreement between the Board and another organisation.

A student is any person working with PBNI on the basis of a formal agreement between the Board and his/her university, college or course provider.

A volunteer is any person working with PBNI under the Board's Volunteering Policy.

A partnership worker is any person working with PBNI on the basis of a formal partnership agreement between the Board and another organisation.

The application of this policy to any of the categories above who are not employees of the Board does not in any way confer on them employee status.

In addition to employees this "Procurement Policy" applies to all the categories given above and to Board Members.

Except where the context otherwise requires, references in this policy to an employee should be read as referring also to the other categories to whom the policy applies.

## 2. Definitions

### Procurement Policy Principles

This policy is based upon the Northern Ireland Public Procurement Policy dated May 2009, developed by the Central Procurement Directorate within the Department of Finance and Personnel. The policy is guided by a clear definition of “public procurement” and the concept of “best value for money” and has adopted the following definitions:

**“Public procurement is the process of the acquisition, usually by means of a contractual arrangement after public competition, of goods, services, works and other supplies by the public service”.** The procurement process spans the whole life cycle from initial conception and definition of the needs of PBNI through to the end of the useful life of an asset or the end of a contract.

The concept of **“best value for money”** is defined as **“the optimum combination of whole life cost and quality (or fitness for purpose) to meet the customer’s requirements”**. This definition enables a public body to compile a procurement specification which includes social, economic and environmental policy objectives within the procurement process. “Whole life cost” includes both quantifiable and non-quantifiable or intangible costs and benefits.

PBNI believes these definitions to be fundamental to this policy and associated procedures.

The award of grants is not included within the activity of public procurement.

## 3. Policy Aim

The procurement of goods, works and services required by PBNI should be conducted in a fair and transparent way.

## 4. Policy objective

The procurement of goods, works and services should be based on value for money, having due regard to propriety and regularity.

## Propriety

It is the requirement that expenditure and receipts be dealt with in accordance with Parliament's intentions and the principles of parliamentary control, including the conventions agreed with Parliament (and in particular the Public Accounts Committee).

## Regularity

It is the requirement for all expenditure and receipts to be dealt with in accordance with the legislation authorising them, any delegated authority and the rules of Government Accounting

## 5. Policy Outcome

The procurement of goods, works and services required by PBNI should be by competition in a form appropriate to the value and complexity of the goods, works or services to be acquired.

## 6. Policy Statement

The Probation Board for Northern Ireland recognises the duties and responsibilities it has as a public sector organisation to operate a Procurement process that will be governed by the guiding principles adopted by the Central Procurement Directorate. These principles are as follows:

- a. **Accountability:** effective mechanisms must be in place in order to enable employees to discharge their responsibility on issues of procurement risk and expenditure.
- b. **Competitive Supply:** procurement should be carried out by competition unless there are convincing reasons to the contrary.
- c. **Consistency:** suppliers should, all other things being equal, be able to expect the same general procurement policy across the public sector.
- d. **Effectiveness:** PBNI should meet the commercial, regulatory and socio-economic goals of government in a balanced manner appropriate to the procurement requirement.

- e. **Efficiency:** procurement processes should be carried out as cost effectively as possible.
- f. **Fair dealing:** suppliers should be treated fairly and without unfair discrimination, including protection of commercial confidentiality where required, without PBNI imposing unnecessary burdens or constraints on suppliers or potential suppliers.
- g. **Integration:** in line with Northern Ireland's policy on joined-up government, procurement policy should pay due regard to the governments other economic and social policies, rather than cut across them.
- h. **Integrity:** there should be no corruption or collusion with suppliers or others.
- i. **Informed decision-making:** PBNI need to base decisions on accurate information and to monitor requirements to ensure that they are being met.
- j. **Legality:** PBNI must conform to European Community and other legal requirements.
- k. **Responsiveness:** PBNI should endeavour to meet the aspirations, expectations and needs of the community served by the procurement.
- l. **Transparency:** When procuring goods and services, PBNI should ensure that on procurement policy and its delivery
  - 1. It reaches the widest range of providers possible
  - 2. There is openness and clarity.

## 7. Guidance and Procedures

A separate Guidance and Procedures Document supports this policy and sets out the methods and financial limits applicable to different procurement processes. The Procurement Control Limits set by the Central Procurement Directorate apply to procurement within PBNI. These are detailed under procurement Guidance Note 01/04 (revised November 2008) and are optimum limits for the procurement of general goods, services and works. Further details are contained in the PBNI Procurement Procedures.



## **8. Complaints**

Any complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the Board's Complaints Policy, Guidance and Procedures.

## **9. Review**

This Policy will be reviewed three years from approval.