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## Stockport Trafford and Rochdale (STaR) Procurement Organisation

Transparency Code  
Recommendations  
28th August 2014

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## 1. Purpose of the document

The document is an initial review regarding the proposed enhancements to the transparency code and the proposed implementation plan.

## 2. Background and Reference Materials

The local government transparency code was issued in May 2014 to meet the government's desire to place more power into citizens' hands to increase democratic accountability. The intention is that it will make it easier for local people to contribute to the local decision making process and help shape public services.

The code preserves the principles of transparency by asking councils to follow 3 key principles when publishing data. They are to:

- respond to public demand
- release data in open formats available for re-use
- release data in a timely way

The Department for Communities and Local Government has provided the following guidance documents, which were used to research the issue and establish the proposals:

A copy of the Transparency code can be accessed by using the following link below:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/308185/Local\\_Government\\_Transparency\\_Code\\_2014\\_Final.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/308185/Local_Government_Transparency_Code_2014_Final.pdf)

## 3. Information which must be published

Part 2 of the code sets the minimum data that Local authorities must publish.

- Mandatory data must be published at least quarterly and no later than one month after the quarter end.
- Data must be published in open and machine readable format (e.g. available on the web in Excel, CSV, and XML instead of an image scan).
- The Information Commissioner's Office will not monitor compliance with the Code – it will react to complaints from the public under existing frameworks e.g. Freedom of Information Act.

The Government endorses the five step journey to a fully open format:

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| One star   | Available on the web (whatever format) but with an open license      |
| Two star   | As for one star plus available as a machine-readable structured data |
| Three star | As for two star plus use a non-proprietary format (e.g. CSV and XML) |
| Four star  | All of the above plus use open standards - World Wide Web Consortium |

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Five star All of the above plus links an organisation's to others' data to provide context

The Government recommends that Local Authorities publish data in three star formats where this is suitable and appropriate, alongside open and machine-readable format, within six months of this code being issued. STaR plan to publish within 4 months and achieve three star status. The detail regarding the mandated and recommended requirements are listed in appendix 1.

## **4. Current Compliance of STaR Authorities**

A scoping exercise has been undertaken to establish the open data currently published by all STaR authorities and a project plan has been produced to bring all three authorities to a position of compliance for mandated information. The plan proposes to have all such activities complete by the end of December 2014, with first publication January 2015. See appendix 2

## **5. Dependencies**

In order to complete the process STaR has highlighted a number of high level dependencies which include:

- Agreement of recommendations required to adopt a standard approach regarding the future Open Data Format to be sought from all 3 STaR partners.
- Once Agreement has been made relevant Stakeholders from Stockport, Trafford and Rochdale need to be identified to ensure full support of recommended changes.
- Once Stakeholders have been identified a mapping exercise will be undertaken to ensure that current ICT and Payment Processes/requirements are fully understood, and that the data can be captured in the format required to comply with the open data recommended changes.

STaR will be working across the three authorities to address these matters.

## **6. Summary**

The paper is a summary of the current position. There is still some clarification required from Central Government as to the precise mandatory requirements. STaR proposes to commence work on the current available guidance and will provide an update as appropriate. There may be decisions required as to the level of transparency / disclosure that each authority wishes to make against the recommended measures and STaR will request guidance as required.

Further information on Transparency Code relating to procurement can be seen in Appendix 3.

Robert Anderson  
Commercial Enablement Manager, STaR Shared Procurement Organisation

## Appendix 1

### 1. Information to be published on a quarterly basis covering Expenditure, P Card Data and Contract Register information.

#### **Expenditure exceeding £500**

- Individual Invoices.
- Grant Payments.
- Expense Payments.
- Payments for Goods and Services.
- Grants.
- Grant in aid.
- Rent.
- Credit notes over £500, and transactions with other public bodies.

#### **For each item of expenditure identified over £500 the following must be published:**

- Date the Expenditure was incurred.
- Local Authority Department that incurred the Expenditure.
- Beneficiary (redacted info manually adjusted).
- Summary of the Purpose of the expenditure.
- Amount.
- Value Added Tax that cannot be recovered.
- Merchant Category (computers, software etc).

#### **Government Procurement Card Transactions.**

§ Local Authorities must publish details of every transaction on a Government Procurement Card and the following details must be published:

- Date of the transaction.
- Local authority department which incurred the expenditure.
- Beneficiary.
- Amount (all spend)

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- Value Added Tax that cannot be recovered.
- Merchant Category (computers, software etc).
- **Procurement information**
  - § Local Authorities must publish details of every Invitation to Tender for contracts to provide goods and/or services with a value that exceeds £5000 for each invitation, the following details must be published:
    - Reference Number.
    - Title.
    - Description of goods and/or services sought.
    - Start, end and review dates.
    - Local Authority Department responsible.

## 2. Information recommended for publication

Part 3 of the code sets out details of data that the government recommends local authorities publish in addition to that the minimum publication requirements set out in Part 2.

### **Expenditure Data**

- Publish information on a monthly instead of quarterly basis, or ideally, as soon as it becomes available and therefore known to the authority (commonly known as 'real-time' publication)
- Publish details of all transactions that exceed £250 instead of £500.
- Publish all transactions on all corporate credit cards, charge cards and procurements, including those that are not a Government Procurement Card.
- Publish the total amount spent on remuneration over the period being reported On, and classify expenditure using the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Service Reporting Code of Practice to enable comparability between local authorities.

### **Procurement information**

- It is recommended that local authorities place on Contracts Finder, as well as any other local portal, every invitation to tender or invitation to quote for contracts to provide goods and/or services with a value that exceeds £10,000 for each invitation.

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- Publish information on a monthly instead of quarterly basis, or ideally, as soon as it is generated and therefore becomes available (commonly known as 'real-time' publication)
- Publish every invitation to tender for contracts to provide goods and/or services with a value that exceeds £500 instead of £5,000.
- Publish details of invitations to quote where there has not been a formal invitation to tender.
- Publish all contracts in their entirety where the value of the contract exceeds £5,000
- Include company registration number at Companies House
- Publish details of invitations to tender or invitations to quote that are likely to be issued in the next twelve months.
- Include details of the geographical (e.g. by ward) coverage of contracts entered into by the local authority
- Publish details of performance against contractual key performance indicators, and information disaggregated by voluntary and community sector category (e.g. whether it is registered with Companies House, Charity or Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Community Interest Company, Industrial and Provident Society, Housing Association, etc)

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## Appendix 2 – Proposed Project Plan

Project	STaR Responsible Officer	01/09/14	08/09/14	15/09/14	22/09/14	29/09/14	06/10/14	13/10/14	21/10/14	27/10/14	03/11/14	10/11/14	17/11/14	24/11/14	05/12/14	08/12/14	15/12/14	22/12/14	29/12/14
<b>Transparency Code Implementation Plan</b>																			
<b>SCOPE</b>																			
Scoping out STaR requirements	RA	█																	
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>																			
Present poposal document to STaR board	SBR		█																
Agree Process to be adopted: Stockport	RA			█															
Agree Process to be adopted: Trafford	RA				█														
Agree Process to be adopted: Rochdale	RA					█													
<b>ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS</b>																			
Identify/Engage with Finance / Stakeholders re proposed change: Stockport	RA				█														
Identify/Engage with Finance / Stakeholders re proposed changes: Trafford	RA					█													
Identify/Engage with Finance / Stakeholders re proposed changes: Rochdale	RA						█												
<b>REVIEW</b>																			
Review ICT and Payment requirements: Stockport	RA					█													
Review ICT and Payment requirements: Trafford	RA						█												
Review ICT and Payment requirements: Rochdale	RA							█											
Agree format for future reporting: Stockport	RA							█											
Agree format for future reporting: Trafford	RA								█										
Agree format for future reporting: Rochdale	RA									█									
Agree Stakeholders for future Reporting: Stockport	RA										█								
Agree Stakeholders for future Reporting: Trafford	RA											█							
Agree Stakeholders for future Reporting: Rochdale	RA												█						
Test requirements for Compliancy: Stockport	RA													█					
Test requirements for Compliancy: Trafford	RA														█				
Test requirements for Compliancy: Rochdale	RA															█			
Review Test results and make necessary changes if required: Stockport	RA																		
Review Test results and make necessary changes if required: Trafford	RA																		
Review Test results and make necessary changes if required: Rochdale	RA																		
<b>IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGES</b>																			
Draft and sign off communication Plan regarding STaR compliancy requirements between all 3 STaR partners	RA																		
Full Compliancy of Transparency Code requirements for STaR confirmed by STaR Enablement Manager	RA																		
<b>Publication of Data</b>	RA																		
Prepare data to be published 1st quarter Oct - Dec14 for Stockport	RA																		
Prepare data to be published 1st quarter Oct - Dec14 for Trafford	RA																		
Prepare data to be published 1st quarter Oct - Dec14 for Rochdale	RA																		
Obtain sign off of data to be published 1st quarter Oct - Dec14 for Stockport	RA																		
Obtain sign off of data to be published 1st quarter Oct - Dec14 for Trafford	RA																		
Obtain sign off of data to be published 1st quarter Oct - Dec14 for Rochdale	RA																		
Publishing data 1st quarter Oct - Dec14 for Stockport	RA																		
Published data1st quarter Oct - Dec14 for Trafford	RA																		
Published data1st quarter Oct - Dec14 for Rochdale	RA																		

### Appendix 3

## Local Government Transparency Code 2014

### Table summarising Procurement information to be published

Information title	Information which must be published	Information recommended for publication
<p><b>Expenditure exceeding £500</b></p>	<p>Quarterly publication                      Publish details of each individual item of expenditure that exceeds £500, including items of expenditure, consistent with Local Government Association guidance, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• individual invoices</li> <li>• grant payments</li> <li>• expense payments</li> <li>• payments for goods and services</li> <li>• grants</li> <li>• grant in aid</li> <li>• rent</li> <li>• credit notes over £500</li> <li>• transactions with other public bodies.</li> </ul> <p>For each individual item of expenditure the following information must be published:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• date the expenditure was incurred</li> <li>• local authority department which incurred the expenditure</li> <li>• beneficiary</li> <li>• summary of the purpose of the expenditure</li> <li>• amount</li> <li>• Value Added Tax that cannot be recovered</li> <li>• merchant category (eg. computers, software etc).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish information on a monthly instead of quarterly basis, or ideally, as soon as it becomes available and therefore known to the authority (commonly known as ‘real-time’ publication)</li> <li>• Publish details of all transactions that exceed £250 instead of £500 (same individual information items)</li> <li>• Publish the total amount spent on remuneration over the period being reported on</li> <li>• Classify expenditure using the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Service Reporting Code of Practice to enable comparability between local authorities.</li> </ul>



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Information title	Information which must be published	Information recommended for publication
<p><b>Government Procurement Card transactions</b></p>	<p>Quarterly publication Publish details of every transaction on a Government Procurement Card. For each transaction, the following details must be published:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• date of the transaction</li> <li>• local authority department which incurred the expenditure</li> <li>• beneficiary</li> <li>• amount</li> <li>• Value Added Tax that cannot be recovered</li> <li>• summary of the purpose of the expenditure</li> <li>• merchant category (eg. computers, software etc).</li> </ul>	<p>Publish all transactions on all corporate credit cards, charge cards and procurements, including those that are not a Government Procurement Card (same individual information items).</p>
<p><b>Procurement information</b></p>	<p>Quarterly publication Publish details of every invitation to tender for contracts to provide goods and/or services with a value that exceeds £5,000. For each invitation, the following details must be published:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reference number</li> <li>• title</li> <li>• description of goods and/or services sought</li> <li>• start, end and review dates</li> <li>• local authority department responsible.</li> </ul> <p>Quarterly publication Publish details of any contract, commissioned activity, purchase order, framework agreement and any other legally enforceable agreement with a value that exceeds £5,000. For each contract, the following details must be published:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reference number</li> <li>• title of agreement</li> <li>• local authority department responsible</li> </ul>	<p>Place on Contracts Finder, as well as any other local portal, every invitation to tender or invitation to quote for contracts to provide goods and/or services with a value that exceeds £10,000. Publish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• information on a monthly instead of quarterly basis, or ideally, as soon as it is generated and therefore becomes available (commonly known as 'real-time' publication)</li> <li>• every invitation to tender for contracts to provide goods and/or services with a value that exceeds £500 instead of £5,000</li> <li>• details of invitations to quote where there has not been a formal invitation to tender</li> <li>• all contracts in their entirety where the value of the contract exceeds £5,000</li> </ul> <p>company registration number at Companies House</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• description of the goods and/or services being provided</li><li>• supplier name and details</li><li>• sum to be paid over the length of the contract or the estimated annual spending or budget for the contract</li><li>• Value Added Tax that cannot be recovered</li><li>• start, end and review dates</li><li>• whether or not the contract was the result of an invitation to quote or a published invitation to tender</li><li>• whether or not the supplier is a small or medium sized enterprise and/or a voluntary or community sector organisation and where it is, provide the relevant registration number.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• details of invitations to tender or invitations to quote that are likely to be issued in the next twelve months</li><li>• details of the geographical (eg. by ward) coverage of contracts entered into by the local authority</li><li>• details of performance against contractual key performance indicators</li><li>• information disaggregated by voluntary and community sector category (eg. whether it is registered with Companies House, charity or charitable incorporated organisation, community interest company, industrial and provident society, housing association, etc)</li><li>• details of existing waste collection contracts, at the point they first publish quarterly contract information under Part 2 of the Code.</li></ul>
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