



Report to: STAR Joint Committee
Date: 21st September 2023
Report for: Information/Discussion
Report of: Assistant Directors, STAR Procurement

Report Title

STAR Procurement Q1 Continuous Improvement Update

Summary

The purpose of this report is to update STAR Joint Committee on the continuous improvements made against our STAR Business Plan 2021-24 and future plans

Recommendations

The recommendation of this report is that the STAR Joint Committee:

- Gives consideration of the continuous improvements made against our STAR Business Plan 2021-24 and future plans

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Elizabeth McKenna and Nichola Cooke
Phone: 07811 983687 and 07711 454555

Background

Financial Impact:	None
Legal Impact:	None
Human Resources Impact:	None
Asset Management Impact:	None
E-Government Impact:	None
Risk Management Impact:	None
Health and Safety Impact:	None

Consultation

No public consultation required

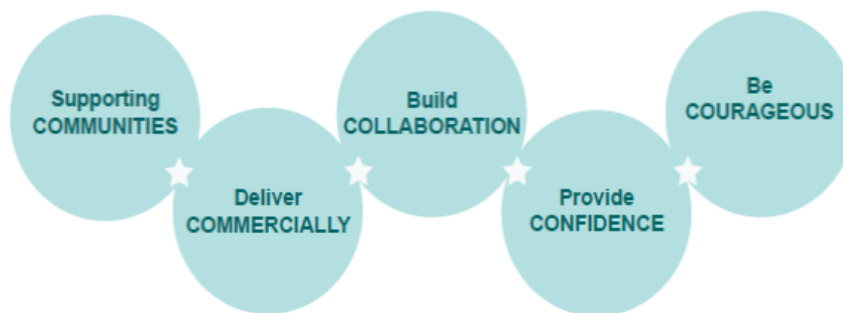
1. Background

- 1.1. The STAR Business Plan 2021-24 was launched in January 2021. This sets the strategic direction for STAR over the next three years, including our vision, objectives, and enablers.

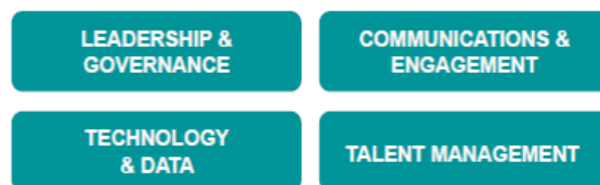
Our Vision

Leading Transformation Through
Procurement and Co-Operation

Our Objectives



Our Enablers



2. Continuous Improvement Group

- 2.1 The Continuous Improvement Group (CIG) met in Q1 and discussed:
- Client survey review
 - Covid PPE enquiry update
 - Carbon net zero discussion
 - Priority Account Scheme (PAS) improvements (Early Payments)
 - New procurement regulations update
 - Continuous Improvement feedback from each authority
 - Vendor – workflows – pipeline improvements

The CI report from the STAR Board meeting on 5.6.23 was shared which included each partner organisation position statement on achievements against the Greater Manchester (GM) Six Priorities.

- 2.2 Ideas on improvements to the Priority Account Service (PAS) were shared across the group and the STAR PAS Steering Group has been re-formed to help support the STAR Partners improve income levels through the scheme.
- 2.3 STAR Wider Leadership Team (WLT) have recently reviewed how STAR delivers Social Value to its Partners; essentially looking at what works well and what needs improving, such as:
 - Review of the 'Twelve Steps to Social Value'.
 - Redefining roles and responsibilities.
 - Developing contractual clauses to support management functionality.
 - Creating an improvement report for Board and Joint Committee Q2.
 - Supporting contract managers in the four Partner organisations to contract manage more effectively the social value secured to drive delivery and impact.

3. Supporting Communities

- 3.1 STAR is collating a report from Social Value Portal (SVP) of delivery of Social Value against TOMs measurement framework and corporate priorities against the cohort of contracts awarded containing a Social Value commitment in 22/23.
- 3.2 SVP have committed to vastly improving their reporting functionality, and STAR has a scheduled training session on 29th September this will include officers from Stockport who are supporting us with the key designs of our reporting requirements. The new reporting platform will be tailored to both corporate reporting requirements in STAR; and will also meet the requirements of each local council, such as reporting down to Directorate level. This has been significantly onerous to drive this requirement from SVP.
- 3.3 Further work has taken place to strengthen the contract management function including role out of contract management training by the SVP; ensuring all suppliers with zero delivery are contacted and challenged; validations have taken place on email automation to ensure it is working consistently across all STAR Partners; and the recently developed criticality tool to prioritise key council contracts is fully embedded.

- 3.4 STAR is supporting Stockport Council on the implementation of a Social Value brokerage system. This will automate the process of linking the Council's key suppliers' Social Value offer to the community needs without any manual intervention. On successful completion of this STAR will communicate success/lessons learnt to the other STAR Partners.
- 3.5 STAR is continuing to work on a pilot approach with Stockport Council to support their suppliers and future bidders to focus on reducing emissions to support the drive towards Net Zero in Stockport and GM by 2038. Early market engagement indicates a lack of knowledge, and guidance and supporting documentation is being created for suppliers. Further detailed engagement is underway and in-house training is being developed to support staff. Timelines indicate that a case study will be created towards the end of September and the pilot will be rolled out further. This will be shared with the other STAR Partners, so a consistent approach can be taken. STAR is also working in collaboration with other GM authorities, plus GMCA and TFGM, to share intelligence and knowledge on this subject area.
- 3.6 STAR is continuing to support all four Partners to have a fully operating Social Value steering group so there is a platform available to promote various themes linked to local, regional, and national priorities such as Net Zero and Employment. All STAR Partners now have some form of cyclical Social Value steering group meeting taking place.
- 3.7 STAR is hosting a smaller 'meet the buyer' event on Wednesday 13th September 2023 aimed specifically at SME /Micro, local organisations. The first pilot event is going to be hosted at Rochdale and the focus points of the engagement event is going to include:
- SME/VCSE's attendees and support organisations to become 'match fit' to tender
 - Increase inclusivity & diversity in our supply chains
 - GM Good Employment Charter – becoming a supporter
 - Net zero commitments
 - Promote pipeline opportunities
 - Promote Social Value and requirements for procurement
- 3.8 STAR has invited key partnering organisations to support and present at the event such as Rochdale Development Agency (RDA), Growth Company, Black United Representation Network (BURN), Federation for Small Businesses (FSB), Real Living Wage Foundation, and the Social Value Portal etc.

Following the event, a review will take place to judge the success and further roll out events like these to other STAR Partners in their Boroughs.

- 3.9 STAR is taking part in an event with Trafford and Thrive Trafford on 27th September, A Business and Community Sector Matching Event. Partners organisations attending include, Trafford's Educational Opportunities Team, Good Employment Charter, Real Living Wage Foundation, and Trafford Armed Forces Covenant. Many VCSE sector organisations have also confirmed attendance such as; Alzheimer's Society; Barnardo's; Beyond Barriers CIC - A Community-focused Trauma and Wellbeing Service; Can Survive UK - Supporting People Affected by or Living with Cancer; Mandem Meet Up - Supporting Men's Mental Wellbeing Through Community, Activity & Purpose; and many more.
- 3.10 STAR is continuing to support the STAR Partners on Real Living Wage (RLW) requirements. Stockport and Trafford have now achieved the RLW accreditation and changes to the procurement documentation have taken place. STAR is supporting the other two Councils to establish in scope suppliers in order that they can consider the financial impact of becoming a RLW accredited and seek governance to sign off any decision made.
- 3.11 Mayor Burnham is attending the September STAR Team 'in person' meeting, at his request. The Leader and CEO of Trafford hope to be in attendance along with Sara Saleh.
- 3.12 STAR is included in a cyclical meeting with senior officers at GMCA, GM Police, TFGM, NHS and the Manchester Growth Company. This particularly focusses on the GMCA report (March 2022) Role of Procurement in Driving Social Value in Greater Manchester. The meeting facilitates sharing best practice and helps track STARs position in relation to the other GM key organisations.

4. Resources: Recruitment and Retention

- 4.1 In general, staff retention is still relatively high compared with the current employment market. STAR managers will continue with 'touch base' sessions in addition to supervisions, Check-ins, and team meetings.
- 4.2 A wider review of the current staffing structure has taken place, we have created two career grades at Procurement Officer and Category Manager levels. This review will continue during 23/24 as we onboard two new Partners.
- 4.3 STAR continues to promote their 'grow your own' ethos with succession planning and successful internal recruitment. Five new members of staff have been successfully recruited to the new Procurement Officer career grade job

profile (including one internal promotion); and the new Category Managers job profile is being finalised by Trafford HR.

5. Delivering Commercially

- 5.1. STAR continues to secure income from external commissions which allows us to work towards a balanced budget each year. This work can potentially secure longer-term relationships and income to strengthen the sustainability of STAR. The support is provided by the Development Team, and this remains separate to the support provided to the four STAR Partner organisations from the Delivery Team.

6. Build Collaboration

- 6.1. STAR has a monthly working group with the STAR Partners on post-contract and contract management working. A Contract Criticality Tool has been developed to be included as part of the pre-procurement process to allow Contract Manager's to assess contract risk and assign a criticality status. This allows the Contract Manager to be proactive and prepare for new contracts. Further Intend training has taken place for Contract Manager's to support use of the system and a free foundation contract management course, provided by the Government Commercial College is being offered as part of the handover process.
- 6.2. The new Procurement Bill is now in the final stages. The Procurement Bill has entered a secondary consultation period, split in to two parts. Part one has been responded to collectively as part of the collaboration with all GM Authorities. STAR are also working collaboratively with GM Authorities working on part two, which is focused more on new transparency requirements. STAR issued an email update to STAR Board in June 23 on the potential changes and will be working closely with partners on the implications of the regulations in terms of contract management transparency requirements over the coming months.
- 6.3. STAR took part in a AGMA/GM workshop to investigate ways to improve the monthly Heads of Procurement meeting. The collaborative working across GM has been highly successful for many years, however GM has a continual changing landscape in terms of work and priorities. A review was required to seek out; what works well; what could be improved; and what are the dependencies / barriers, this was looked at across several areas including:
 - Delivery model
 - Ways of working

- Pipeline and contracts
- Policy and practice

The workshop was well attended and there are many improvements on the horizon.

7. Provide Confidence

- 7.1. A skills gap analysis within STAR is now fully complete, and we have a clear position on development areas which include; the new Procurement Bill, TUPE transfer information; further carbon literacy training; ethical responsible procurement; and systems training. Most of these areas have been covered however there are several new and promoted staff members, refresher training is required in certain areas.
- 7.2. Over the last twelve months, many improvements have taken place to the quality and accuracy of data to improve reporting, including, Intend quality assurance, pipeline information, and live contract data. Monthly processes are now fully implemented to ensure standards are maintained. STAR works with key council stakeholders weekly/monthly to ensure data quality is continually improving, to help increase compliance statistics. There is ongoing work with data quality and STAR senior officers meet monthly with Assistant Directors at Tameside, nominated leads at Stockport, as well as attending DMT/SMT meetings within Trafford and Rochdale to share this pipeline data to improve procurement planning and data quality.
- 7.3. Improved focus on pipeline is taking place to intelligently assess pipeline requirements and resources. Plotting both pipelines and available resources together will help STAR to see future peaks and troughs to allow resources to work more strategically across multiple categories. This will reduce the risk of anything being overlooked, reduce delays and ensure a good work life balance is maintained, helping staff morale, and help ensure compliance stats are maintained/improved.
- 7.4. The new savings / procurement efficiency process is now in place Q1. The process has eliminated the duplicated process of ratifying savings and providing a more efficient process. The actual process of calculating savings is under review.
- 7.5. The 'STAR Chamber' meeting took place in Q1. This is a bi-annual internal meeting where all the Category Managers present back to members of the Wider Leadership Team on progress made against each of their individual

Category Strategies. Category Strategies are shared with service leads via the regular pipeline meetings and are driven through procurement activity. As with previous chamber events great progress has been made and Category Managers have fed back that they are in the process of updating their Category Strategies including, priority work areas and market condition updates.

8. Be Courageous

- 8.1. STAR attended several, collaboration, network and training events in Q1:
- National Social Value Taskforce
 - GM Meeting on the Role Procurement has in Delivering Social Value
 - Social Value Round Table Event – Stockport Council
 - AGMA/GM Collaboration Improvement Workshop
 - Presented at the Innovation Zone at the LGA Annual Conference
 - Transforming Public Procurement Learning and Development - Local Government Superuser meeting
 - GM Social Value Network: Spring network meeting
 - Chief Procurement Officers Advisory Forum
 - Q1 iNetwork Executive Board Meeting
 - Stockport Council Leadership Forum
- 8.2 STAR attended the annual National Social Value Conference in June, and STAR participated on panels - Social Value 101 panel; and Unlocking the Power of Public Pound panel. Both sessions were very well attended. Lorraine Cox has been appointed to Chair the National Social Value Taskforce.

9. Recommendations

It is recommended that STAR Joint Committee:
Give consideration of the continuous improvements made against our STAR Business Plan 2021-24 and future plans.