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1. INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

NHS Education for Scotland (NES) is a collaborative, innovative and inclusive learning organisation that provides high quality education, training, workforce development, workforce data and technology for Scotland's health and social care workforce. Our vision is to support better rights-based quality care and outcomes for every person in Scotland through a skilled, capable, and resilient health and social care workforce.

Having the right numbers of skilled, trained, and supported staff, in the right place, at the right time and in the right roles is essential to providing high quality health and care services, which address health inequalities and encourage and support people to take more responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

Beyond offering national workforce and digital services that are crucial in supporting frontline healthcare providers, NES also directly funds and manages learners who represent a substantial part of the NHS Scotland's patient-facing workforce. We oversee the development and delivery of healthcare education and training for the NHS, as well as for the health and social care sectors and other public entities. Our remit covers undergraduate, postgraduate, and ongoing professional development across Scotland.

By encouraging careers in health and social care, we create jobs and stimulate economic growth. Our programmes help ensure that professionals in these fields are skilled, confident, and driven to enhance outcomes for individuals. We advocate for human rights through our education and training and hold others accountable when these rights are not upheld.

We also recognise the challenges being experienced across the health and social care sector as Scotland's population ages and we recover from the impact of the pandemic. The need to balance increased and changing health and social care needs alongside the availability of workforce and finance means it has never been more important to find new ways of supporting staff wellbeing, working in local communities, and to innovate, using technology, data, information, and intelligence to find better solutions.

During 2024/25 NES continued to deliver new career pathways, exploring new roles and qualifications to sustain a workforce that is enabled, empowered, and motivated to deliver improved outcomes. We also continued to leverage our digital expertise, both in infrastructure and in Technology Enhanced Learning, to harness the potential of technology in supporting our aims.

At the same time, we have been looking to the future. Through our work in education, early intervention, prevention, and by supporting other public sector, third sector and private sector bodies, we have started to address systemic and deep-rooted inequalities across our society.

The objective of this Annual Procurement Report is to document and highlight NES's performance and notable accomplishments in executing its Procurement Strategy 2024-27 from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025. The NES Procurement Strategy for 2024-27 is framed within the context of the organisation's Strategic Framework.

Annex 1 of this report contains the Procurement Strategy Action Plan, highlighting activities and progress as well as planned actions for 2025-26, in accordance with the 2024-27 NES Procurement Strategy. This report adheres to the Scottish Government's May 2017 Procurement Strategy Guidance and Template and meets the requirements of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, which mandates that public organisations with regulated procurement

expenditures of £5m or more (excluding VAT) must publish a procurement strategy and report on it annually.

NES is committed to the Scottish Government Procurement Journey and works closely with NHS Scotland National Procurement (NP) around the development of, and compliance with national contracts. Part of this collaborative work with NP involves ensuring that collaborative best practice is shared across National Health Boards and the wider public sector.

This Annual Report focuses on the organisation's corporate expenditure (influenceable spend on external goods and services) of £26.8m for the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025. This excludes the funding NES provides to Health Boards for the salary costs of post graduate trainees, the clinical training of undergraduate and post graduate trainees and nationally agreed contracts for utilities.

2. SUMMARY OF REGULATED PROCUREMENTS COMPLETED

2.1 Definition

Under the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, any public contract valued at £50,000 or more (excluding public works contracts) and any public works contract valued at £2,000,000 or more is deemed a Regulated Contract. A regulated procurement refers to any procedure conducted by a contracting authority concerning the awarding of a proposed regulated contract and concludes when the award notice is published or when the procurement process ends by other circumstances. This includes awards made under both contracts and framework agreements. Annex 2 lists the regulated procurements carried out during the reporting period.

2.2 Summary of Regulated Procurements

The following table summarises the regulated procurements in the period.

Type of Regulated Procurement	Quantity in Period	Estimated Value
Framework Call Offs	1	£135,000
Contracts Awarded	21	£5,552,540
Total Regulated Procurements	22	£5,687,540

The following table summarises the size of supplier that have been awarded regulated contracts in financial year 24/25.

Company Type	Total
Micro (1-9 employees)	11
Small (10-49 employees)	1
Medium (50-249 employees)	2
Large (over 250 employees) including Universities	8
Total	22

There were multiple contracts awarded to small and medium enterprises (SME's) totalling £1.6m.

Awards by Registered Business Location	Total
Scotland	16
UK Other	5
Elsewhere	1
Total	22

2.3 Collaborative Contracts

Among the many and varied activities that NES engage in through our work in education, early intervention and prevention, a number of contracts were let or delivered in the period which enable wider access to centrally procure services, including:

Digital Library Services

NES has procured the Digital Library service on behalf of the Health and Social Care community across Scotland for another three years. Via the Knowledge Network Library, the library offers a single interface to search NHS Scotland's national collection of electronic resources (including access to evidence summaries, databases, medicines information, e-Journals, articles, and e-Books) along with local NHS Scotland library collections (primarily print books). NES worked closely with a number of collaborators including Health Education England (HEE) to enable a UK-wide framework agreement for the provision of services.

Delivery of a Four-Year Programme in Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy

NES has awarded a contract to Human Development Scotland (HDS) for the provision of practical and theoretical training in psychoanalytical psychotherapy with children and young people. This four year full-time clinically based professional training leads to qualification as a Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist and eligibility for employment as a Child Psychotherapist.

Nursing and Midwifery - Return to Practice (RtP)

A contract was awarded in Sept 2024 to Glasgow Caledonian University for the development and delivery of a Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) approved Return to Practice (RtP) programme enabling former nurses and midwives to re enter the professional register. The contract will run for 3 years with an option to extend for a further 24 months.

National Clinical Skills Training & Assessment for Pharmacy Independent Prescribers

NES Pharmacy has funded training for pharmacists to complete non-medical prescribing training courses (Supplementary Prescribing and then IP) in Scotland since 2003.

Clinical assessment and consultation skills training are crucial to increasing the competence of pharmacist IPs to deliver high quality patient care. NES awarded a competitive contract to the University of Dundee to deliver this training.

2.4 Awards Without a Competitive Procurement Process

NES identifies and logs all contract awards which did not go through a Regulated Procurement process through our Waiver of Formal Tendering Procedure (single source justification).

This procedure mandates that any spend over £10k, if not on a pre-let contract or Framework Agreement, is accompanied by a Waiver form approved by the Director of Finance which provides the rationale for the direct award, including:

- The timescale genuinely precludes competitive tendering; or
- Specialist expertise is required, and evidence is provided to demonstrate that this is available from only one source; or
- The task is essential to complete the project, and arises as a consequence of a recently completed assignment and engagement of different consultants for the new task would be inappropriate; or
- There is clear benefit to be gained from maintaining continuity with an earlier project. However, in such cases the benefits of such continuity must outweigh any potential financial advantage to be gained by competitive tendering; or
- Where provided for in the Scottish Capital Investment Manual.

Against Regulated Procurements (>£50k) there were 3 contracts awarded totalling £260,900 in this category in the reporting period. We continue to focus on reducing the number and value of any procurements treated this way.

3. REVIEW OF REGULATED PROCUREMENT COMPLIANCE

3.1 Introduction

This section seeks to demonstrate how NES procurement has contributed to the achievement of its specific procurement objectives and principles outlined in its Procurement Strategy and how it has complied with the general duties in the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014.

3.2 Procurement Objectives

Objective 1 – Alignment with the NES Strategic Plan and Core Values

The NES Strategy for 2023-26 focuses on being a collaborative, innovative and inclusive learning organisation that provides high quality education, training, workforce development, workforce data and technology for Scotland's health and social care workforce. This supports our vision to deliver better rights-based quality care and outcomes for every person in Scotland through a skilled, capable and resilient health and social care workforce. Procurement is only one tool, albeit a critical one, in achieving NES's strategic objectives.

This report coupled with the NES Procurement Strategy 2024-2027 published on the NES internet provides a comprehensive understanding of the linkages between the procurement objectives and the organisation's strategic aims and objectives.

Objective 2 – Deliver value for money and best value procurement

NES procurement seeks to award contracts based on best value achieved rather than lowest price.

In the first instance, we will seek to identify where an appropriate Scottish Government, National Procurement, and/or Crown Commercial Services framework contract is available, either for Direct Award or mini competition as appropriate.

The NES procurement team has worked with internal colleagues and external partners throughout the reporting period to develop appropriate specification content, evaluation criteria and associated weightings which balance the importance of quality, delivery, and cost. The output of this activity is reflected in all current template documentation.

Objective 3 – Making it easy for suppliers to do business with NES

NES has published a detailed Suppliers' Guide that aligns with the Scottish Government's Procurement Journey, explaining how NES procures services and how suppliers can access competition opportunities via Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) and PCS-Tenders (PCS-T). The guide is available and regularly updated on the NES website.

NES also publishes an Ethical Procurement Policy to clearly detail our expectations of our supply chain, in terms of Sustainability and Fair Work practices.

PCS-T is adopted for all open tenders produced by NES, thereby maximising the accessibility for all suppliers, and ensuring full compliance and standardisation. All tender documentation is written in plain and clear language and kept as simple as possible to avoid any confusion.

All unsuccessful tenderers are offered the opportunity for formal feedback/debrief on their performance, regardless of procurement route or size of contract. NES encourages all potential suppliers to register with PCS and in addition, via our guidance, to be aware of opportunities to be part of both new and existing Framework Contracts. Wherever possible, NES utilises all available DPS (dynamic purchasing systems), national frameworks and collaborative agreements with other health boards. In addition, we also direct SME's to seek advice and assistance from the Scottish Government supported Supplier Development Programme.

Objective 4 – Lessons Learned for the Future

NES seeks to learn from internal and external feedback, and from examples of best practice through continuous evaluation and review of tendering activity. Internal reviews are conducted regularly throughout the year with each NES directorate.

The eight National boards meet regularly to exploit shared learning, and the NES procurement management team meets weekly to share lessons learned and to make recommendations for any potential changes to policy and/or processes. Discussions include reference to ongoing contract negotiations, new statutory requirements, e.g., GDPR, new Framework Contracts, etc.

3.3 Procurement Principles

Principle 1 – Financial Justification

All major Procurement exercises involve the production of a NES Business Case or Project Initiation Document, and associated budgets are established prior to the commencement of any external procurement activity. The Finance Business Partnering Team are fully engaged, prior to any award of contract, to ensure accuracy of budgetary information.

Principle 2 – Specification of Requirements

The NES Procurement Team have established comprehensive templates and associated guidance for Invitations to Tender and Competitive Written Quotations. These include clear contract deliverables and anticipated outputs/benefits and provide for the establishment of quality and performance standards. We work closely with our internal stakeholders to ensure specifications are robust and appropriate.

Principle 3 – Assessing and Minimising Risk

NES has in place a comprehensive Risk Management Strategy which includes explicit reference to the management of risks associated with contractual arrangements. The standard NES tender and contract documentation for use with third parties includes specific risk management requirements and mitigations and we work closely with all internal stakeholders to ensure these mitigations are understood and managed.

NES also has in place templates to support staff in the assessment of risk and guidance on how to share and manage risk as well as provide advice on specific risk mitigation.

Principle 4 – Qualified and Experienced Staff Resources

The centrally managed Procurement Team forms part of the NES Finance and Procurement Directorate and is responsible for the provision of professional procurement advice and support to all NES staff. All staff are appropriately qualified and/or experienced and have received training relevant to their role. In addition, all Procurement staff have been trained and qualified on PCS-T to afford full flexibility of resources.

All staff have access to the national NHS Train 2 Procure website which has been developed to provide a platform to provide consistent training and guidance to all procurement staff in NHS Scotland.

In addition to supporting the tendering, evaluation and contract award activity and standard operational processes, during the reporting period the team also sought to:

- Ensure compliance with the requirements of Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015, the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 and all relevant updates
- Ensure compliance with National Contracts, Procurement Directives, and the NES Standing Financial Instructions as they relate to procurement
- Identify opportunities for improvements to Procurement governance and practices
- Promote awareness of best practice in Procurement

- Engage with and provide comprehensive guidance for internal managers and potential suppliers
- Continue to develop policies, processes, and templates in line with the *Procurement Journey*.
- Be fully trained in Climate Literacy training and all current Climate Emergency obligations

All Procurement team members have Personal Development Plans in place, which reflect their individual skills and needs against the requirements of the Procurement Journey and work continues to align the team to the Scottish Government's National Procurement Development Framework (NPDF).

Principle 5 – Sustainability Duty

Sustainable Procurement and the Climate Emergency

Amendments to the Climate Change (Scotland) Act placed additional reporting duties on Public Sector procurement. Along with the Sustainable Procurement Duty it has been agreed that it would be most effective if NHS Scotland Procurement act as one. There is now an established and formalised Sustainable Procurement Steering Group (SPSG) reporting to the NHS Scotland Procurement Services Senior Management Team (PS-SMT), who formulate and drive action plans across all procurement teams. This is chaired by a member of the PS-SMT with a core of procurement professionals on the group, sustainability experts and representation from Scottish Government. It also has links to other sustainability groups such as the National Environmental Sustainability Group and Transport & Logistics Services Experts Group. The role of the SPSG is to provide the focal point and core oversight group for sustainable procurement activities across NHS Scotland Procurement teams. Its purpose is to ensure sustainable procurement activities are communicated, planned, and delivered on an NHSS wide basis. This approach also ensures that Procurement is aligned to the NES Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan.

NES has continued to work with our supply base to deliver non-financial benefits in all tenders. In 24/25 we have introduced a *scored* criteria in our major bids where it is relevant and proportionate to do so (e.g. Digital Library Services), that requires commitment from suppliers to sign up to the Community Benefits Gateway (CBG) and commit to supporting initiatives in this space. This platform aims to give back to the people of Scotland through promotion and use of the CBG, which works to match willing NHS Scotland suppliers with Scottish third sector organisations who are looking for assistance with a variety of needs. This can be anything from supporting training and development via knowledge transfer initiatives, donation of equipment, or volunteering support.

We have continued to work with our colleagues at the NHS national level Sustainable Procurement Steering Group (SPSG) to analyse our data and identify areas within environmental and ethical to work on in 25/26 We have carried out initial assessments and reviews on our top suppliers to benchmark environmental and ethical performance. This focuses on areas for benchmarking, improvement, and collaboration over the next twelve months. Information has been gathered from a wide range of databases and sources with initial findings indicating that over 70% of our top suppliers are actively engaged in the

climate emergency and have Carbon Reduction Plans (CRP) in place detailing their formal strategies to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions over time.

Ethical Procurement

- NES has established and published a NES Ethical Procurement Policy, which all prospective tenderers are required to read, understand, and accept as part of the tendering process. This is made available to all staff and suppliers on the NES website. This policy is continually reviewed to ensure it remains current and addresses issues raised in the period (e.g. UNCRC).

Procurement Skills

- All NES staff involved in the Procurement process are briefed on the Ethical Sustainable procurement policy – *the policy is available to all staff on the NES intranet and on the NES website, together with the Sustainability Code of Conduct.*
- Tenders / specifications include relevant sustainable procurement evaluation criteria, and this is embedded in procurement templates
- During the year, we have ensured that NES Procurement staff have completed all Climate Literacy training, and we are now considering how to adopt the use of the Scottish Government Sustainable Procurement tools in addition to all other legislative requirements and how we will balance this with our drive to ensure accessibility.

Procurement Process

- Regular review of supplier / tender evaluation process to include ethical procurement and sustainability in the evaluation process
- invitations to tender templates require a clear demonstration of linkages with the strategic aims and objectives of the NES Procurement guidelines and a fundamental link to our Sustainability responsibilities.

Engaging Suppliers

- For all major tenders, a ‘Prior Engagement’ event is held to allow suppliers to review and shape our specifications. These are posted via a Prior Information Notice (PIN) on PCS. PINs are adopted wherever practical and commensurate with strategic significance.
- As described earlier, NES has in place a comprehensive Suppliers’ Guide and Ethical Procurement Policy which is published on the NES internet and makes it clear how NES procures its services and how all potential suppliers can access relevant opportunities.
- NES promotes the use of NHS Scotland’s Community Benefits Gateway online service that works to match willing NHS Scotland suppliers with Scottish third sector organisations who are looking for assistance with a variety of needs. This can be anything from supporting training and development via knowledge transfer initiatives, donation of equipment, or volunteering support.

Other related activities

- In our efforts to comply with the Scottish Government Policy for NHS Scotland on the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development and to support the delivery of the NHS Scotland Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy we procured and launched an employee salary sacrifice scheme for electric vehicles. This scheme enables our

employees to give up an amount from their gross salary in exchange for a non-cash benefit, in this case a fully maintained and insured car. The scheme will only include vehicles that emits 75g or less of CO2 per kilometre. Launched in Summer 2023, the scheme has already delivered over 35 cars and saving the equivalent of over 70 tonnes CO2.

Principle 6 – Equality and Diversity

NES has a commitment to ensure that everyone it deals with, and employs are treated fairly and equally regardless of race, colour, gender, disability, age, ethnic or national origin, trade union activity or faith. NES's Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2021-2025 reflects this commitment. In turn, these commitments are reflected in all Procurement processes and contract templates. Invitations to Tender require all potential suppliers to complete a comprehensive Equality and Diversity questionnaire, as a mandatory requirement.

All procurement documentation is reviewed annually, in consultation with the NES Head of Equality, Diversity and Human Rights. This annual review of our Equality and Diversity - Procurement Duty is submitted to, and approved by, the NES Audit and Risk Committee.

Organisations who are awarded contracts are expected to comply with all current fair work practices, equality and diversity legislation and actively adopt equalities of employment and service delivery as specified in the NES Suppliers' Guide and the NES Ethical Procurement Policy.

NES are constantly striving to achieve fairness in the workplace through our supply base, and all tenders include a standing requirement to consider Fair Work Practises to ensure the highest standards of service quality. We expect contractors to take a similarly positive approach to fair work practices as part of a fair and equitable employment package.

Although not mandated, we have ensured that operatives working on NES contracts are paid the 'Real Living Wage' wherever appropriate and practicable (e.g. renewal of all cleaning contracts pays a premium to ensure RLW is paid to workers on NES sites). This further confirms our critical focus on Ethical Procurement, Sustainability, Fair Work, Community Benefits and Equality and Diversity.

The Fairer Scotland Duty (the socio-economic duty) was enacted in Scotland on 1st April 2018 and sets out an expectation that public bodies will actively consider, at an appropriate level, what more they can do to reduce the inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage in any strategic decision-making. We therefore also consider this when creating and evolving our documentation.

We continue to support our drive to ensure Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME) have access to as wide a range of opportunities as possible by applying a tendering process for requirements over £10k. In the reporting period NES spent over £9.8m (£8.23m in 23/24) with more than 250 SME's.

Principle 7 – Management of Contracts and Continuous Improvement

Throughout the reporting period, the Procurement Team supported key strategic contracts to ensure performance measurement and management remain central to NES objectives. We also offered tailored contract reviews for key suppliers and critical agreements.

Principle 8 – Legislative Requirements and Best Practice

NES has established a comprehensive suite of Procurement templates which align to approved internal policies and procedures, delegated authority levels, etc. In addition to meeting all statutory and legislative requirements, significant ongoing activity is undertaken during the year to ensure that all procurement documentation is aligned to evolving legislation (e.g., Free Trade Agreements, Fair Work, Whistleblowing, Innovation, etc.). NES is committed to organisation-wide use of these templates, in order to ensure high standards of transparency, probity and accountability.

Principle 9 – Fraud Awareness and Prevention

NES has a zero-tolerance approach to fraud; there is no acceptable level of fraud. All NES staff members are required immediately on appointment to complete Essential Learning on a number of policies including Counter Fraud. This training contains worked examples, sets expectations for individual staff member behaviours, and provides information in respect of reporting suspicious or potentially fraudulent acts.

NES also works closely with NHS Counter Fraud Services (CFS) to regularly provide awareness training across the organisation. All Counter fraud activity is reported to the NES Audit Committee on a quarterly basis.

The published NES Code of Conduct for Suppliers clearly explains our zero-tolerance approach to fraud.

There have been no reported issues relating to fraud within this reporting period.

4. OTHER MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Procurement of Fairly and Ethically Traded Goods and Services

As described earlier, NES has published an Ethical Procurement Policy. This is made available to all staff and suppliers on the NES website. The nature of NES's work means we do not procure many goods which exist outside of nationally agreed frameworks, and all other services explicitly require prospective tenderers to demonstrate their adherence to our policies and standards.

4.2 Payments to Contractors, Sub-Contractors, and Third Tier Sub-Contractors

NES uses a standard set of terms and conditions that state we pay suppliers within 30 days of receiving an invoice however, in line with Scottish Government policy, we aim to achieve payment within 10 days. During the reporting period, NES paid 98.75% of suppliers within 30 days (target 95%) and 96.31% of payments were made within 10 days (target 85%). This is a significant achievement and involves many different NES agencies working very closely with both Procurement and Finance.

4.3 Use of Community Benefit Requirements

All public sector contracting authorities must consider including community benefit requirements for procurements valued at £4 million or more. However, NES tender documents require all potential suppliers to identify community benefits where applicable, and numerous opportunities have been found at lower contract values.

In addition, NES seeks to contract wherever possible through national frameworks at Scottish Government and NHS National Procurement, and the requirement of suppliers to demonstrate their commitment to the realisation of community benefits. This addresses the Scottish Government's and Scottish public sector organisations' aspirations with regard to ethical, social, economic, environmental and sustainability issues. Typical examples include the Scottish Government's collaborative Publishing, Print, Design and Associated Services (PPDAS), as well as the mobile and desktop client devices frameworks where there are specific community benefit targets applied through their supply chains.

Contributing to the welfare of the Scottish community through the promotion and utilisation of the Community Benefits Gateway (CBG) is an important element of our national strategy. This initiative seeks to pair NHS Scotland suppliers with third sector organisations in Scotland that require various forms of assistance. These needs range from support for training and development through knowledge transfer initiatives to the donation of equipment and volunteering services. Through the tendering process for our national e-library contracts in 24/25 we have had 6 suppliers sign up to conduct at least one activity via the CBG process.

Other community-oriented activity

Mobile Skills Unit (MSU)

24/25 was the busiest year yet for the NES Mobile Skills Unit, our purpose-built simulation based clinical skills training capability which includes enabling access to remote and rural areas that might otherwise have limited access to such resources. There were 35 separate visits covering 9 territorial NHS boards, 2 specialist boards, the Armed Forces and Scottish Rugby. Over 1500 people attended 200 training sessions. Ninety-nine percent of people who received training on the MSU rated both the training and the facility as either excellent or good and 100% reported training was of benefit to them; 90% reported that the training they received on the MSU was not available locally."

Key events included:

- Six Faculty Development courses were held on the Mobile Skills Unit including one in Barra and an Optometry specific course in Inverness.
- [A multi-agency major incident simulation](#) in Glasgow which involved more than one hundred emergency service personnel. This event was shortlisted for a national award.
- In collaboration with the University of Aberdeen and NHS Grampian the Mobile Skills Unit visited [Rubislaw Park Care Home](#) for its first visit to a care home in Scotland. This work was a finalist at the Scottish Care Awards in November.
- In collaboration with NHS 24 and the Care Home Collaborative additional clinical skills training for social care staff took place at Erskine Veterans Village in Bishopton.
- A psychiatry simulation course was delivered in Benbecula and Stornoway.
- Visits to three Scottish rugby sites for pre-hospital pitch side care training.

4.4 Promoting Compliance with the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

NES procurement documentation makes explicit reference to the requirement for suppliers to declare that all necessary reviews, tests, and examinations have been made or will be made prior to performance of the Services to ensure that the Services are designed and performed to be safe and without risk to the health and safety of persons using them and requires the provision of information to demonstrate this. NES also requires to be indemnified against all direct losses incurred as a result of a health and safety breach and reserves the right to reject suppliers for health and safety breaches. There have been no incidents within the reporting period.

5. SUPPORTED BUSINESSES SUMMARY

While NES's procurements offer limited opportunities within the Supported Business structure, NES makes it a priority to consider it first when possible. We remain vigilant to the possibility to use the network, and all relevant Supported Business literature is available on the NES intranet to further communicate and build awareness.

We continue to engage the Scottish Government's national dynamic purchasing system (DPS) for the provision of requirements reserved for supported businesses. A very small example of this is our use of a supported business to provide our IT asset disposal and WEEE recycling but this has been somewhat limited due our drive to maintain and reuse as much IT as possible.

6. FUTURE REGULATED PROCUREMENTS SUMMARY

In addition to planned expenditure, NES regularly receives funding in year to support the delivery of Scottish Government initiatives, etc.

The workplan for 2025/26 currently includes the following:

Subject Matter	Expected Award Date	Expected Start Date	Estimated Contract Value
Digital Front Door delivery partner	May-25	Jun-25	C£25m*
Digital Learning Infrastructure	Dec-25	Mar-26	tbd**
Digital Prescribing and Dispensing Pathways	Nov-25	Mar-26	tbd**
Workplace Strategy Coaching	Sep-25	Feb-26	tbd**
NMAHP Programmes evaluation framework	Mar-25	Jun-25	tbd**

*DFD – total value if all options taken up over multiple years

**In some cases, estimated contract values have not been provided to ensure competition in the tendering process

ANNEX 1 – NES PROCUREMENT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

Procurement Objective / Principle	Key Planned Actions from April 2024 to March 2025	Progress in 24/25 against actions from April 2024 to March 2026
Compatibility with the NES Strategic Plan	Turas Learn/Personal Development Plans (PDP) are aligned and managed. Procurement survey conducted annually (in October of each year) Standardised tender templates with the wider NHSS and NHBs adopted across all regulated Procurement. eLibrary – review with stakeholders to ensure streamlined and cost-effective content to best meet Health and Social Care targets	Turas Learn is fully adopted and utilised. Results continue to show excellent continuity and ongoing improvement throughout the significantly challenging post-C19 period. Templates updated and regularly reviewed. e-Library fully retendered and optimum MEAT (Most Economically Advantageous Tender) awards made across the e-Library estate in early 2025.
Delivering Value	Savings tracked against budget and reported. Spend under contract – increase target to 86% by end of 2023/24.	Target exceeded in 24/25. Spend under contract (including all SG and NHS frameworks increased to >94%
Finding it easy for Suppliers to do Business with NES	Continue to promote standard Pre-Qualification/Request for Info/Request for Quote/Tender documentation. All regulated procurement is managed via standardised Invitation to Tender (ITT) forms. Quick quotes for all procurements >£10k in line with SFIs. Contracts Register formally published on Public Contracts Scotland (PCS)	Public Contracts Scotland-Tender (PCS-T) and standard templates utilised for all procurements greater than £25k. This remains standard practice. “Quick Quote” (QQ) adopted for all procurement between £10k and £25k. In line with Procurement Regulations
Supplier Management Policy and Lessons Learned for Future (management of contracts & continuous improvement)	Develop Contract Review and Management Strategy for key suppliers and key contracts, adopting wider NHS principles. Consolidate and standardise Supplier Management process across NHS National Health Boards (NHB) and target minimum three major PCST opportunities.	NES Digital Library tender is a ‘Once for Scotland’ resource for all NHS boards and social care bodies. Targeted for Q1/2026 - NHB collaboration committee action.

Procurement Objective / Principle	Key Planned Actions from April 2024 to March 2025	Progress in 24/25 against actions from April 2024 to March 2026
Qualified and Experienced Staff Resources	Training programme for Procurement Staff in line with the Procurement Journey CIPS accreditation - highlight potential NES candidates via TURAS Appraisal process. All senior staff receive refresher training on Reform Act and EU main principles. All Procurement staff to have undergone common NHB Competency Framework analysis of skills and training needs in 2020 in readiness for consolidate PTP approach to People and Skills	‘Turas Appraisal’ Personal Development Plan (PDP) captures all training and development requirements. Candidates identified. Linked to Personal Development Planning process. Ongoing. Delays have meant profiling of job groups should have commenced in Q4 24. Action moved to 2026.
Assessing and Minimising Risk	Risk Register to be developed for all tenders greater than £100k. Lessons learned and contained within Procurement Risk Register – review and record any lessons learned and embed learning in new contracts.	These risks are captured within local risk registers. Register created and being regularly reviewed and updated.
Social, Economic and Environmental Issues	Embed Sustainability ethos throughout NES through Specification guidance and sustained widespread use of standard templates. Procurement remains key member of NES Sustainability Development Programme Board (SDPB) and the Sustainable Procurement Steering Group (SPSG) Create a consolidated approach to Ethical Procurement	All tenders require prospective bidders to detail their approach to Sustainability. Scored criteria now implemented against major programmes (i.e., e-Library) for Community Benefits, using the Community Benefits Gateway All Procurement templates and processes have been reviewed in 23/24 to ensure alignment with NES strategy and national standards. NES Ethical Procurement Policy published and regularly updated on NES internet. Latest inclusion such as UNCRC incorporated.

Procurement Objective / Principle	Key Planned Actions from April 2024 to March 2025	Progress in 24/25 against actions from April 2024 to March 2026
	New activity – Assess key suppliers' engagement in the Climate Emergency and Ethical Procurement	Initial survey of key suppliers – June 2025. Measure existence of Carbon Reduction Plans, Modern Slavery statements and adherence to Sustainability targets. Gap analysis and follow to be implemented Q4 25/26
Delivering Value Through Collaboration	Maintain NES representation and attendance at appropriate National Procurement meetings. Participate in collaboration and working group meetings with other National Health Boards and wider NHSS NP NES to identify and lead a minimum of two collaborative procurements from overall NHB opportunities plan	NES represented at all Heads of Procurement Delivery Group (HPDG) meetings. At least one member of the NES Procurement team attended all meetings. Examples – Penetration testing, Executive Coaching, and Digital Library negotiated and accessible by all National Health Boards

ANNEX 2 – INDIVIDUAL REGULATED PROCUREMENT LISTING

Published Date	Title	Total Value	Contract Awarded To
08/04/2024	C002070 - Delivery of Level 4 Group Triple P Training and provision of associated materials	£454,350	Triple P UK Limited (GB)
16/08/2024	Bothwell Street Data Centre Co-Location	£135,000	DataVita
02/09/2024	C002073 Provision of Professional Coaching Framework	£300,000	Various
04/09/2024	C002040 Cataract Surgery Simulator	£934,960	Haag Streit UK (GB)
18/09/2024	C002063 - Pharmacy post-registration academic modules for Clinical Decision Making, Advanced Clinical Examination Skills (ACE Courses), and Research.	£196,200	University of Strathclyde (GB) / Robert Gordon University (GB)
20/09/2024	C002069 Return to Practice (RtP)	£670,000	Glasgow Caledonian University (GB) /
25/10/2024	C002060 non-medical endoscopy theory preparation programme	£84,000	Glasgow Caledonian University (GB)
13/01/2025	C002085 - Delivery of an educational programme in Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy to Doctorate level (SCQF Level 12 or equivalent)	£620,850	Human Development Scotland (GB)
21/01/2025	C002086 - National Clinical Skills Training for Pharmacists	£196,5600	University of Dundee (GB)
04/03/2025	W002186 Medical Simulation Training Courses	£69,900	University of Aberdeen (GB)
04/03/2025	W002181 Independent Prescribing for Optometrists Postgraduate Ocular Therapeutics (Part-Time Course)	£97,500	Glasgow Caledonian University (GB)
19/03/2025	C002100 NHS Scotland Management Training Scheme (MTS): Provision of online psychometrics to support the recruitment process of graduate-level applicants	£55,020	Saville Assessment (GB)
19/03/2025	C002101 NHS Scotland Management Training Scheme (MTS): Provision of online assessment centre to support the recruitment process of graduate-level applicants.	£104,160	Amberjack Global Limited (GB)

This data reflects all regulated procurement and provides detail which is also published on the Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) website <https://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/>