

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 26 February 2026
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Start Well Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	All School Procurement Exercise - Printers and Photocopiers
Purpose of Report:	To seek Cabinet approval to commence procurement of a provider to supply and maintain all printers and photocopiers for up to 53 schools within the Vale of Glamorgan Council.
Report Owner:	Cabinet Member for Education, Arts, and the Welsh Language
Responsible Officer:	Director of Learning and Skills
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Officers Consulted: Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources Operational Manager, Strategy and Resources Performance, Policy and Procurement Officer Operational Manager, ICT Business Improvement Manager Senior Category Specialist, Ardal Procurement.
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive decision by the Cabinet
Executive Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This report proposes commencing a tender process for a single, centrally managed photocopier contract for all schools within the Authority. Schools would join the contract as their existing agreements expire, ensuring a smooth transition and minimal disruption. • There is an urgent need for schools to achieve significant cost efficiencies within increasingly constrained budgets. • Currently all of the Council's schools have separate contracts to independently source printers and photocopiers. These schools have varying requirements in terms of machine specifications, volumes, and service needs. • This approach has resulted in fragmented purchasing, limited negotiating power, and inconsistent pricing structures. Without a coordinated approach which takes advantage of

economies of scale, schools cannot leverage their collective buying power, which could otherwise deliver substantial savings.

- By consolidating procurement under a single, all-schools tender, the Council would support schools to secure the best possible value for money while maintaining service quality and reliability.

Recommendations

1. To seek Cabinet approval to commence a procurement exercise for the provision, installation, support and maintenance of replacement multifunctional devices (printers and photocopiers) for up to 53 schools delivered through a centrally managed and phased implementation programme.
2. That the Director of Learning and Skills, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education, Arts and Welsh Language, the s.151 Officer/Head of Finance and the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to finalise the procurement approach and make the contract award.
3. That delegated authority be granted to the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services to enter into and sign the appropriate contract documentation including any permitted extension options and variations in accordance with the terms of the agreement and the Council's governance requirements.
4. That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Learning and Skills to implement the contract, including any phased onboarding of schools .

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To ensure compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and public procurement legislation and to secure a consistent cost effective and reliable managed print solution across schools through a planned replacement programme.
2. To enable the procurement process to be completed efficiently within required timescales without returning to Cabinet following tender evaluation, while maintaining appropriate governance oversight through consultation with the relevant Cabinet member, s.151 officer/Head of Finance and the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services.
3. To ensure all contractual arrangements are legally robust and compliant with legislation and governance requirements and to allow the agreement to be concluded promptly following contract award.
4. To enable effective mobilisation and operational management of the service, including phased implementation across schools, ensuring continuity of provision and appropriate contract management.

1. Background

- 1.1 Currently, schools address their printing and reprographic needs via individual contracts through multiple suppliers. This results in fragmented contracts, inconsistent pricing, and missed opportunities for cost savings.

- 1.2** Many schools lack the capacity and expertise to run compliant, competitive tender processes, leaving them vulnerable to higher costs and inefficiencies.
- 1.3** This project would consolidate procurement under a single, centrally managed contract that delivers best value for money, maximises economies of scale, and ensures compliance with procurement regulations.
- 1.4** By centralising the contract, it is anticipated that this would reduce administrative burdens on schools, standardise service levels, and secure predictable, competitive pricing. Additionally, the tender would support sustainability objectives by prioritising energy-efficient devices and responsible waste management.
- 1.5** This initiative aligns with the Council's firm commitment to help schools reduce deficit balances, safeguard financial sustainability, and redirect savings toward core educational priorities. A unified approach would strengthen operational resilience and deliver long-term benefits for pupils, staff, and the wider community.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1** One of the primary barriers to effective procurement is some schools lack the internal capacity, expertise, and infrastructure to undertake robust tendering processes. This can lead to suboptimal contracts that do not fully align with the Councils Procurement strategy or long-term sustainability goals.
- 2.2** A unified tender process will:
 - Maximise economies of scale by aggregating demand across all schools.
 - Standardise service levels and pricing, ensuring fairness and transparency.
 - Reduce administrative burden on individual schools by centralising procurement expertise.
 - Support sustainability objectives, including reducing waste and improving energy efficiency through modern, cost-effective devices.
 - Enhance budget predictability by securing fixed, competitive rates over the contract term.
- 2.3** This initiative aligns with the Directorate of Learning and Skills commitment to support schools in achieving financial sustainability and operational resilience. By implementing an all-school approach, we would enable schools to redirect savings towards core educational priorities.
- 2.4** There are a number of significant benefits to the whole school approach and they are set out in the table below for clarity.

Benefits of a Whole-School Printer/Photocopier Tender

Benefit	Description
Cost Savings	Aggregating demand across 53 schools maximises economies of scale, reducing overall costs.
Best Value for Money	Secures competitive pricing and consistent service standards through a single, robust procurement process.
Administrative Efficiency	Reduces workload for individual schools by centralising tendering and contract management.
Improved Compliance	Ensures adherence to procurement regulations and best practice, reducing risk of non-compliance.
Budget Predictability	Provides fixed, transparent pricing over the contract term, aiding financial planning.
Community Well-Being Benefits	As the aggregated spend will be over £250,000 the winning tenderer will be required to deliver community well-being benefits to the Vale of Glamorgan. This will be at no extra cost to the Council or the schools and must be in addition to what they are already delivering as a company.
Enhanced Service Quality	Standardises maintenance and support levels across all schools, improving reliability and uptime.
Sustainability	Enables selection of energy-efficient devices and consolidated waste management, supporting environmental goals.
Strategic Alignment	Supports the Vale of Glamorgan's objective to reduce deficit balances and ensure long-term sustainability of school sites.

Procurement Timetable

It is intended for the contract to be in place for 1st June 2026 and the indicative timetable is set out below.

Stage	Date
Issue of Invitation to Tender	13th March 2026
Closing date for Clarifications	12:00 (Noon) 8th April 2026
Closing date for Tender Submission	12:00 (Noon) 15th April 2026
Evaluation of Tender	16th April – 15th May 2026
Intention to Award Letters	15th May 2026
Standstill Period	18th May – 28th May 2026
Contract Award	29th May 2026
Contract Start Date	1st June 2026

2.5 Award Criteria and Methodology

2.6 All quotations will be evaluated and awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous and sustainable offer, not lowest cost, assessed on the following award criteria:

Criteria	Weighting %
Community Wellbeing benefits	10%
Price	30%
Quality	60%
	100%

Note- Successful bidder may be subject to financial checks.

2.7 From 12th January 2026, the Vale of Glamorgan Council has been using a new online system called Proactis to manage all contract opportunities worth over £75,000, all the tender documents, clarifications and submissions will be handled through Proactis.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1 The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 (“the 2015 Act”) requires the Council to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.
- 3.2 To make sure we are all working towards the same purpose, the 2015 Act puts in place seven well-being goals on the Council. The 2015 Act makes it clear the listed public bodies must work to achieve all of the goals.
- 3.3 This proposal would contribute to achieving the wellbeing goals by improving sustainability of school budgets through a centralised contract that maximises economies of scale and reduces overall costs.
- 3.4 The 2015 Act, requires that when undertaking actions “in accordance with the sustainable development principle” the Council must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. By ensuring that school financial decisions and service contracts provide the best possible value for money, the Council is ensuring that it is compliant with its responsibilities.
- 3.5 The “sustainable development principle” is defined as being, "The process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals." The action that a public body takes in carrying out sustainable development includes setting and publishing well-being objectives and taking all reasonable steps in exercising its functions to meet those objectives.

- 3.6** These are specifically linked to education with a number of objectives. We have prioritised the need to raise standards of achievement as one of our well-being objectives. We are proud of the Vale of Glamorgan and our place in Wales and that the use of the Welsh language is growing in the Vale of Glamorgan. We respect and value diversity within our communities and recognise the importance of promoting equality of opportunity. We also appreciate our unique heritage and culture and the importance for people of all ages to enjoy a range of activities and to have opportunities to be creative. We have therefore identified valuing culture and diversity as one of our eight well-being objectives.
- 3.7** The Vale of Glamorgan Council's five well-being objectives are: Creating Great Places to Live, Work and Visit; Respecting and Celebrating the Environment; Giving Everyone a Good Start in Life; Supporting and Protecting Those Who Need Us; and Being the Best Council We Can Be. This proposal supports our wellbeing objectives by supporting schools to make prudent financial decisions thereby ensuring that the maximum possible funding directly supports teaching and learning.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** The tender process will support sustainability objectives, including reducing waste and improving energy efficiency by enabling selection of energy-efficient devices and consolidated waste management, supporting environmental goals.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1** Schools currently collectively spend in excess of £400k on individual contracts. By managing a central contract, it is anticipated that significant financial savings can be made.
- 5.2** If Cabinet approve this course of action all savings will go directly to school budgets.
- 5.3** The Council would manage the contract on behalf of schools and funding will remain delegated to schools. Schools entering into the new arrangements will sign a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Council, which will allow us to recharge the costs to schools from the consolidated invoice.
- 5.4** Budget forum would be consulted on the SLA prior to the commencement of the contract.

Employment

- 5.5** There are no direct employment implications as a result of the revised programme. Workload relating to the management of this contract will be

managed within existing team resources. There will be a positive impact on school based staff who currently procure and manage their own individual contracts.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.6** This procurement exercise will be managed by Ardal, in line with the Vale of Glamorgan's Procurement Policy, PCR 2015, and the framework terms and conditions. Ardal is the collaborative procurement service for the Vale of Glamorgan, Cardiff, Torfaen and Monmouthshire Councils.
- 5.7** All tender documentation, clarifications and submissions will be managed through Proactis, the Council's online e-tendering portal.
- 5.8** The route to market will be via the Welsh Government Framework: IT Products and Services (iii), using the Multi-Functional Devices lot. This framework is due to go live in mid-February. By utilising this Welsh Government framework, the Council is ensuring the procurement is conducted via a compliant route in accordance with PCR 2015. The tender will be issued to all suppliers appointed to the lot and run as a mini-competition.
- 5.9** Tenders received will be evaluated in accordance with the published evaluation criteria. The lowest priced tender will score highest for the price element. Quality and community well-being benefit responses will be scored individually by evaluators, followed by a consensus meeting to agree final scores. The tender achieving the highest overall score will be awarded the contract.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1** None.