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Jamie Groves
Managing Director,
Denbighshire Leisure Ltd.

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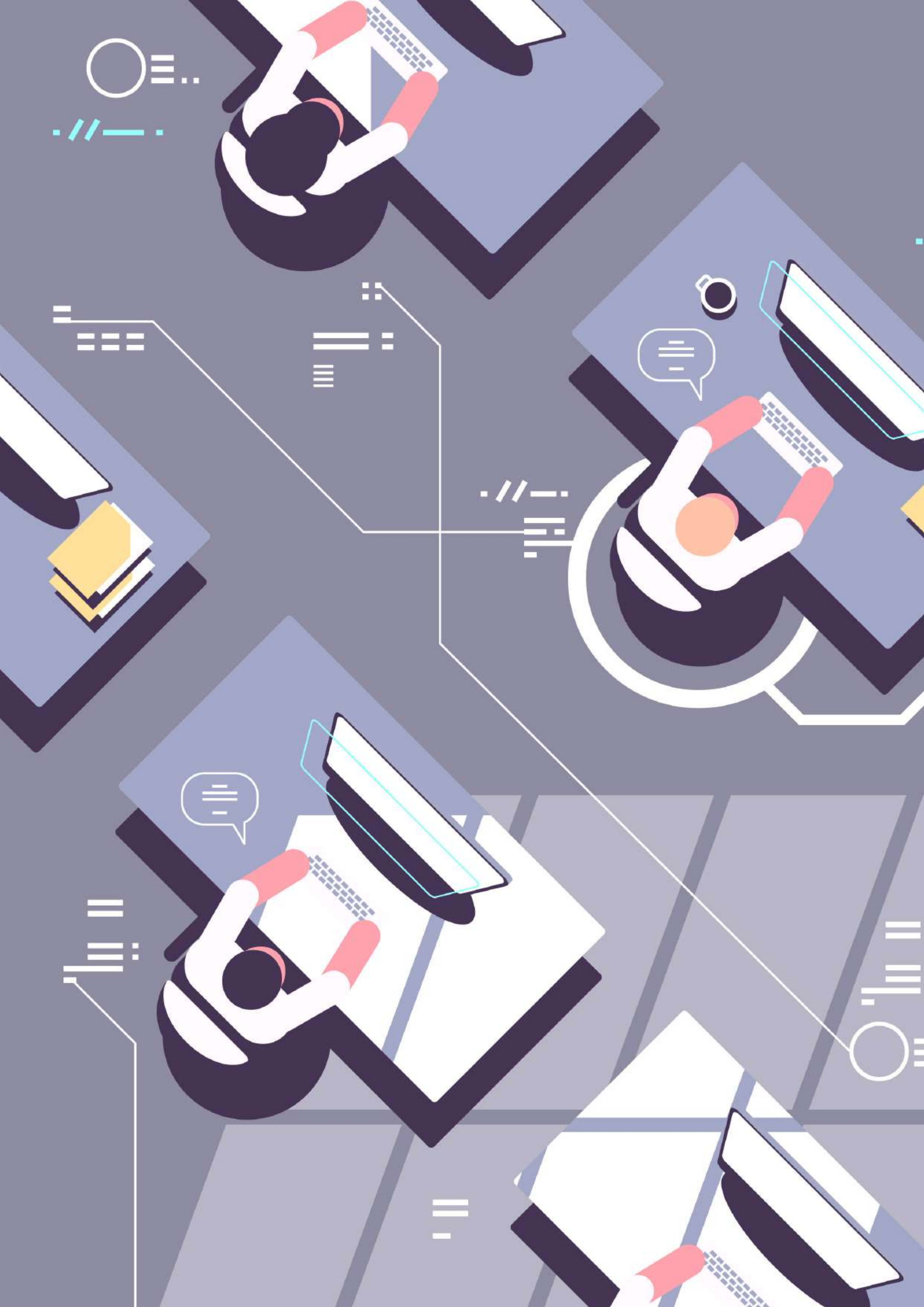

By Hayder Feely
Senior Manager
Globl Workplace Procurement
Expedia Group

For years, procurement's role in corporate real estate followed a familiar pattern. By the time we were brought into a project, the major decisions had already been made. The office location was agreed, the lease was signed, and the business case was set. Procurement's job was to step in, run a competitive process, and appoint the right teams to deliver.

That model still exists, but it is no longer where the real value sits.

Increasingly, procurement is being brought in earlier, not just to source delivery teams, but to help shape the decisions that sit behind them. In many organisations, that shift is quietly influencing how workplace strategy itself is formed.

Takeaway: The biggest change is not how procurement runs projects, but when it enters the conversation.

> **The biggest change is not how procurement runs projects, but when it enters the conversation.**

From delivery support to strategic influence

Traditionally, procurement in corporate real estate was highly execution-focused. Typical triggers for involvement were clear: a new office needed to be fitted out, a facilities contract required renewal, or furniture needed to be sourced for a growing team.

From there, the process was well understood. Procurement would run a structured sourcing exercise, evaluate bids, negotiate commercial terms, and appoint suppliers. Success was measured through competitive pricing, contractual robustness, and smooth project delivery.

It is a model that works, but it places procurement downstream of the most important decisions.

In many cases, earlier choices around location, scale, and investment were shaped by corporate real estate, finance, and leadership teams. Procurement's role was to enable delivery, rather than influence direction.

That boundary is now shifting.

Takeaway: Procurement had been judged on how well it executed decisions, not how early it helped shape them.

A broader seat at the table

A combination of factors, including hybrid working, cost pressure, and a sharper focus on capital efficiency, has forced organisations to rethink how they use space. As a result, the questions being asked at the outset of projects have become more complex.

- Do we need this space at all?
- How should we prioritise investment across locations?
- What is the right balance between flexibility and long-term commitment?

These are not decisions procurement owns, but they are increasingly decisions procurement contributes to.

By bringing structured market insight into the conversation, procurement can help test different scenarios. What does option A versus option B actually cost to deliver? How do different lease structures or timing decisions impact overall spend? Where are the commercial risks likely to sit?

In practice, this often means working alongside real estate and finance teams to shape more informed decisions. For example, aligning lease break points across locations to avoid overlapping costs, or stress-testing the true delivery cost of consolidation scenarios before commitments are made.

It is a shift from reacting to decisions, to helping inform them.

Takeaway: Good procurement may not decide the strategy, but it makes the trade-offs behind that strategy visible.

Managing risk where it matters most

Corporate real estate procurement remains one of the more complex areas within the function. Capital projects carry inherent uncertainty, and the consequences of getting decisions wrong can be significant.

Cost escalation, supply chain disruption, programme delays, and contractor performance risk are all part of the landscape. The structures put in place at the beginning, including contracts, risk allocation, and supplier selection, play a critical role in how those risks are managed.

Procurement's role here goes well beyond negotiating price. It involves setting up the commercial framework that governs how projects are delivered, how accountability is maintained, and how risks are shared.

Well-structured contracts, clear governance, and the right choice of partners often have a far greater impact on outcomes than marginal savings achieved during tendering.

Takeaway: In capital projects, the commercial structure often matters far more than the headline price.

Building supplier ecosystems, not just project teams

Another noticeable shift is how organisations approach their supply base.

Rather than sourcing each project independently, many are moving towards more structured supplier ecosystems across construction, project management, workplace services, and facilities management. The aim is to create consistency, improve reliability, and reduce the friction of starting from scratch each time.

For procurement, this requires a more long-term view. It is about identifying partners who can deliver across multiple projects and regions, building relationships that extend beyond a single contract, and creating frameworks that balance standardisation with local flexibility.

> **Good procurement may not decide the strategy, but it makes the trade-offs behind that strategy visible.**

These ecosystems also create space for better outcomes over time. Trusted partners develop a deeper understanding of the business, challenge assumptions, and contribute insight that is difficult to access through purely transactional engagements.

Takeaway: The strongest supply chains are not built project by project, but relationship by relationship.

Finding value beyond the obvious

Some of the most valuable procurement work happens away from high-profile projects.

In many organisations, there are areas of spend that sit quietly in the background, receiving little attention while accumulating cost over time. Offsite records storage is a good example.

Over the years, businesses often build up large volumes of archived material stored across multiple locations. This is often compounded through acquisitions, where incoming records may have limited indexing or unclear retention rules. In many cases, the safest option is simply to store everything. Over time, those volumes grow into a persistent cost base that is rarely revisited.

Individually, the costs may seem small. Collectively, they can become significant.

By taking a step back and analysing the data, procurement teams can identify opportunities to introduce structured retention and destruction programmes, consolidate suppliers, and improve cost visibility.

It is a simple example, but it highlights a broader point. Procurement's value is not only in sourcing new services, but also in bringing clarity and control to existing ones.

Takeaway: Some of the biggest savings are not found in new deals, but in costs that were never questioned.

Beyond real estate: a broader shift in procurement

While these changes are particularly visible in corporate real estate, the underlying shift is not unique to this category.

Across many areas of procurement, there is a similar move away from a purely transactional role towards something broader. Procurement is increasingly expected to contribute to strategic decisions, provide commercial insight, and help organisations navigate complexity.

The specifics may differ between categories, but the direction is consistent. The most effective procurement teams are those that engage early, think holistically, and focus on long-term value rather than short-term gains.

Takeaway: The future of procurement is not category-specific, it is mindset-specific.

Looking ahead

The most effective procurement teams today are not defined by how well they run tenders, but by how early they are involved and how broadly they think.

In corporate real estate, that means contributing to portfolio decisions, managing risk in capital investment, building supplier ecosystems, and identifying opportunities that sit outside traditional sourcing.

It is a role that blends commercial thinking with practical delivery experience, and one that continues to evolve.

Procurement is no longer just supporting the delivery of workplace projects. It is playing an increasingly important role in shaping how those workplaces are planned, funded, and delivered.

Takeaway: Procurement has moved from sourcing teams for projects to helping shape the strategy those projects serve.


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7.1433

REASSESSING GLOBAL SOURCING

WHY TOTAL COST OF DELIVERY MUST GUIDE THE NEXT GENERATION OF PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

By Allan Wright MBA,MSc, FCIPS
Owner
Scapa Services (UK) Ltd

For more than two decades, global sourcing has been widely regarded as a hallmark of procurement maturity. The pursuit of low cost country suppliers extended offshore manufacturing networks, and large scale outsourcing arrangements became synonymous with competitiveness and operational efficiency. Yet recent disruptions — geopolitical instability, freight volatility, pandemic-related shocks, and tightening sustainability expectations — have exposed the structural vulnerabilities inherent in long, complex supply chains.

As organisations reassess their sourcing strategies, a more rigorous and comprehensive approach is gaining prominence: Total Cost of Goods at Point of Delivery (TCO POD). This framework moves beyond the narrow focus on unit price and instead evaluates the full economic, operational, and risk-related implications of sourcing decisions. In doing so, it provides a more accurate basis for determining whether global, regional, or domestic supply models deliver the greatest long-term value.

The Limitations of Unit Price as a Decision Driver

Traditional procurement practices often prioritised the lowest ex works or FOB price, assuming that offshore production inherently delivered cost advantages. However, this approach obscures the numerous cost elements that accumulate between the supplier's dispatch point and the buyer's operational environment. When these additional costs are not fully quantified, organisations risk underestimating the true financial burden of extended supply chains.

Moreover, the strategic consequences of long lead times, geopolitical exposure, and supply chain fragility are increasingly difficult to ignore. As global markets become more volatile, the limitations of price-centric sourcing become more pronounced.

Understanding the Full Cost Landscape

A robust TCO POD assessment incorporates a wide range of cost drivers that materially influence the real cost of supply.

> "The global sourcing strategies that once delivered competitive advantage are no longer universally fit for purpose."

These include, but are not limited to:

Cost of Money and Working Capital
Extended lead times tie up capital for prolonged periods. Organisations must account for:

- Financing inventory in transit.
- Interest charges on letters of credit or advance payments.
- Increased safety stock requirements.
- Cash flow implications of long replenishment cycles.

The financial impact of carrying inventory for 60–120 days can significantly erode any perceived savings from offshore sourcing.

Incoterms and Risk Allocation
Incoterms define the distribution of cost, responsibility, and risk between buyer and seller. Misinterpretation or misalignment can result in:

- Unexpected freight or handling charges.
- Liability gaps during transit.
- Duplicate or insufficient insurance coverage.
- Disputes over damaged or delayed goods.

Selecting the appropriate Incoterm is a strategic decision that directly influences cost and risk exposure.

Freight, Logistics, and Port Related Charges
Global logistics introduces a complex array of variable costs, including:

- Ocean, air, or multimodal freight.
- Container surcharges and fuel adjustments.
- Demurrage, detention, and port congestion fees.
- Customs brokerage and last mile delivery.

These costs fluctuate with market conditions and can rapidly transform a low cost sourcing strategy into an expensive one.

Examples of Insurance Coverage: A Clause, B Clause, C Clause
Marine cargo insurance varies significantly in scope:

- **A Clause**: Comprehensive all risks coverage, suitable for high value or fragile goods.
- **B Clause**: Named risk coverage for general cargo.
- **C Clause**: Minimal coverage, typically for bulk or low value shipments.

Selecting the wrong clause can expose organisations to unnecessary premiums or substantial uninsured losses.

> "The financial impact of carrying inventory for 60–120 days can significantly erode any perceived savings from offshore sourcing."

Risk Management and Contingency Costs
Global sourcing heightens exposure to a range of risks:

- Political instability and regulatory change.
- Tariffs and trade barriers.
- Currency volatility.
- Natural disasters and climate-related events.
- Supplier insolvency or quality failures.

Mitigation strategies — such as dual sourcing, buffer inventory, or expedited freight — carry their own costs, which must be incorporated into TCO POD calculations.

Compliance, Documentation, and Administrative Overheads
International trade requires extensive documentation and regulatory compliance, including:

- Certificates of origin
- Customs declarations
- Import duties, tariffs, and VAT
- Product-specific regulatory approvals

These administrative requirements add cost, complexity, and time to the sourcing process.

Sustainability and ESG Considerations
Extended supply chains contribute to:

- Higher carbon emissions
- Increased packaging waste
- Greater social compliance risk

As ESG reporting becomes mandatory across multiple jurisdictions, these impacts will increasingly translate into measurable financial obligations.

The Strategic Case for Insourcing and Near-Sourcing

As organisations quantify the full cost of global sourcing, many are reconsidering the balance between offshore, nearshore, and domestic supply models. Insourcing and regional sourcing offer several strategic advantages:

Reduced Lead Times
Shorter supply chains enable:

- Faster replenishment
- Lower inventory levels
- Improved responsiveness to market changes
- Enhanced customer service performance

Economic and Trade Benefits
Domestic sourcing supports:

- Local employment and skills development
- Regional economic resilience
- Reduced trade imbalances
- Strengthened industrial capability

Lower Risk Exposure
Proximity reduces vulnerability to:

- Geopolitical disruptions
- Port closures and transport bottlenecks
- Currency fluctuations

Sustainability Gains

Shorter transport distances reduce emissions and simplify compliance with environmental standards.

Inward Investment and Government Support
Organisations may benefit from:

- Regional development grants
- Innovation and productivity funding
- Skills and training incentives

These mechanisms can offset the initial costs of reshoring or expanding domestic capacity.

A More Mature Procurement Mindset

The shift toward TCO POD represents a broader evolution in procurement thinking. Leading organisations are moving beyond transactional cost minimisation and adopting a more strategic, value-driven approach. This includes:

- Integrating TCO POD into sourcing evaluations
- Collaborating with finance to quantify working capital impacts
- Assessing suppliers on resilience, capability, and sustainability
- Challenging long-standing assumptions about “low cost” sourcing
- Aligning procurement decisions with national and regional economic priorities

This more holistic perspective positions procurement as a strategic contributor to organisational resilience and long-term competitiveness.

The global sourcing strategies that once delivered competitive advantage are no longer universally fit for purpose. As supply chains become more complex and volatile, organisations must adopt a more comprehensive and realistic approach to evaluating sourcing decisions.

> In an era defined by uncertainty and rapid change, the organisations that thrive will be those that understand, and act upon, the real cost of supply.

By embracing Total Cost of Goods at Point of Delivery, businesses can:

- Strengthen operational resilience
- Improve financial performance
- Reduce environmental impact
- Support domestic economic growth
- Make more informed, sustainable, and strategically aligned sourcing choices

In an era defined by uncertainty and rapid change, the organisations that thrive will be those that understand — and act upon — the real cost of supply.

INTRODUCING THE UK LEISURE FRAMEWORK: DELIVERING IMPACTFUL COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Procurement teams across local authorities are under increasing pressure to deliver compliant, value-driven leisure, sport and cultural developments while managing risk, time constraints and audit requirements. The UK Leisure Framework (UKLF) is the UK's only leisure-specific procurement framework, designed to help councils, education providers and public bodies deliver high-quality, socially valuable leisure developments with speed, certainty and full compliance.
Whether you're planning a large new build transformation, or a smaller refurbishment project, the UKLF (owned and managed by Denbighshire Leisure Ltd) offers a direct award route that simplifies procurement while ensuring transparency and value for money. By streamlining the tender process, it reduces risk, accelerates delivery and unlocks investment in sustainable leisure infrastructure.
The UKLF is fully compliant with public procurement regulations and is a pre-procured, competitively tendered framework.

At the heart of the framework is Alliance Leisure, a proven development partner. Working with local authorities, leisure trusts and operators, Alliance Leisure designs and delivers engaging, place-based environments that have clearly defined project outputs aligned to business cases. Over 25 years, Alliance Leisure has delivered more than 300 projects representing over £530 million of investment, from major multi-site regeneration programmes to innovative outdoor spaces, theatres and museums.

Framework in Action: Compliant Delivery with Measurable Outcomes

A recent standout example is the Warsop Health Hub, delivered in partnership with Mansfield District Council. Procured through the UK Leisure Framework, this award-winning facility won the Design, Build or Refurbishment of the Year Award at the ukactive Awards 2025. The hub brings together sport, health and wellbeing under one roof, featuring a 15m swimming pool with splash play area, gym, multi-court sports hall, café and community multi-purpose spaces. Delivered on time, within budget and fully electric, Warsop Health Hub demonstrates how framework-enabled projects can achieve social impact, sustainability and community engagement.

Another strong example is The Cath Thom Leisure Centre in Hyndburn. Delivered through a partnership between Hyndburn Borough Council, Sport England and Alliance Leisure, and procured via the UK Leisure Framework, this circa £13 million all-electric facility was designed to be economical, inclusive and sustainable from the outset. Accessibility-first planning supported operational performance and net-zero ambitions. The project focused on delivering what the community needed most: a 25m swimming pool, gym, flexible activity spaces, fully accessible design including Changing Places facilities, integration within a wider sports village and low-carbon, energy-efficient systems supporting long-term operational savings. As Hyndburn Leisure's Chair and Chief Executive noted, "The Cath Thom Leisure Centre will act as a catalyst for increased participation in physical activity across Hyndburn for many years to come."

What sets the UK Leisure Framework and Alliance Leisure apart is a collaborative, outcomes-focused approach. Projects are co-created with stakeholders and residents, delivering long-lasting social, economic and environmental benefits. Councils and procurement teams benefit from a fully compliant, transparent and efficient process, while communities gain modern, inclusive facilities that encourage physical activity, wellbeing and connection.

For procurement teams, the UK Leisure Framework enables:

- Fully compliant direct award route
- Reduced procurement timelines
- Pre-qualified supply chain
- Transparent pricing and benchmarking
- Reduced legal and delivery risk

At a time when public investment must deliver measurable value, the UK Leisure Framework provides a trusted route for high-quality leisure and cultural developments. With Alliance Leisure's experience and expertise, public sector bodies can reduce risk, accelerate delivery and maximise community impact - turning ambitious leisure visions into tangible, socially valuable outcomes.

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