




Chichester City Council

## MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

### AGENDA

**MEMBERS ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE TO BE HELD AT 4.00PM ON WEDNESDAY 8 APRIL 2026 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER**

  
Town Clerk  
1 April 2026

**FIN2026/114.APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To note apologies, receive from members of the Committee prior to the meeting.

**FIN2026/115.DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Declarations of interest by Members of the Committee in matters on the agenda of this meeting.

**FIN2026/116.MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the ordinary committee meeting held on the 18 March 2026.

- <https://chichestercity.gov.uk/minutes-finance-committee-18-march-2026/>

**FIN2026/117.UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

- Florence Park Sea Cadet and Community Centre - Procurement adviser selected and report to be discussed in later Agenda item.
- E-Ink Displays - Project Manager in continued discussion with the supplier and will report back to the Business Plan Sub-Committee on the 18 May 2026.
- Staging - Order Placed and delivered.

**FIN2026/118.FLORENCE PARK SEA CADET AND COMMUNITY CENTRE - PROCUREMENT ROUTE APPRAISAL AND SELECTION**

This report provides a summary of the most appropriate routes to market for the appointment of a professional design services team to deliver the Florence Park Community Centre project. It sets out the options considered, the rationale for the selection of Option 1 (Open Procedure), and recommends the decision to procure the project design phase through an open procedure.

**FIN2026/119.ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

## **FIN2026/120.DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Date of next meetings:

- Finance Committee (Community Centre oversight)
  - 6 May 2026
  - 3 June 2026
- Finance Committee (Ordinary Meeting)
  - 10 June 2026

[Florence Park Procurement report to councillors.](#)

FIN2026/118 - FLORENCE PARK SEA CADET AND COMMUNITY CENTRE -  
PROCUREMENT ROUTE APPRAISAL AND SELECTION

Last modified: 2026-03-31



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**Report to Finance Committee  
from  
James Brigden, Project Manager  
31/03/2026**

**Florence Park Sea Cadet and Community Centre - Procurement Route Appraisal and Selection**

**Purpose of this Report**

This report provides a summary of the most appropriate routes to market for the appointment of a professional design services team to deliver the Florence Park Community Centre project. It sets out the options considered, the rationale for the selection of Option 1 (Open Procedure), and recommends the decision to procure the project design phase through an open procedure.

**Background and Project Overview**

Chichester City Council requires the appointment of a multi-disciplinary professional services team, including an Architect, to advance Phase 1 and 2 of the Florence Park Sea Cadet and Community Centre. This activity will see the procurement of RIBA Stage 3-5 which includes the developed design, surveys and planning support.

The estimated construction value of phases 1 and 2 is £1.5 million, with professional services costs estimated in the range of £200,000 to £270,000 (exclusive of VAT). As the estimated value of professional services may exceed the UK Government Services Threshold of £207,720 (including VAT), the procurement process must comply with either the Procurement Act 2023 or, where applicable, be called off from a compliant framework established under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

A decision is also required on whether the Council should appoint a Lead Consultant (who would assemble and manage the wider team) or whether the Council itself should separately appoint and manage individual disciplines. Following analysis, a Lead Consultant model is strongly preferred as it provides a single point of responsibility, reduces coordination and programme risk, delivers better cost control, and minimises management overhead for the Council.

**Procurement Options Considered**

Three procurement routes were identified and assessed:

**Option 1 - Open Procedure or Competitive Flexible Procedure (via Find a Tender)**

This route involves advertising the requirement on the Government's Find a Tender service in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023. All eligible suppliers may submit a bid, with evaluation conducted against published criteria.

**Option 2 - Mini-Competition via a Compliant Framework**

Under this route, the Council would call off a contract from an existing framework agreement (such as Crown Commercial Services RM6356 or Fusion21) through a mini-competition among appointed framework suppliers. Pre-qualification checks have already been completed on framework suppliers, removing the need for a PSQ.

**Option 3 - Direct Award via a Compliant Framework**

This option involves a direct award to a single supplier on an existing framework (such as Bloom Services or Constellia), without competitive tendering between framework members. While it offers speed and the possibility of continuity with the current architect, it requires robust internal governance sign-off and benchmarking evidence to demonstrate value for money.

**Comparative Assessment of Options**

The table overleaf summarises the key advantages, disadvantages, and considerations for each option.



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Option	Disadvantages	Advantages	Other Considerations
Option 1 Open Procedure	<p>Longer process (10–16 weeks, or more with Competitive Flexible Procedure stages)</p> <p>Additional time and resource required to implement new arrangements</p> <p>Rigorous process discipline required throughout</p>	<p>Fully transparent and defensible process</p> <p>Open to all eligible suppliers, maximising competition</p> <p>Can withstand scrutiny of funders, auditors, and public interest groups</p> <p>Council can stipulate preferred contract terms</p>	<p>All tender documents must be ready at commencement of advertising</p> <p>Clear evaluation criteria must be published at time of advertising</p> <p>Pre-app work from current architect can be reused as input</p>
Option 2 Mini-Competition via Framework	<p>Council bound by framework contract terms</p> <p>Limited to framework-appointed suppliers — may exclude current designer</p> <p>Percentage surcharge for framework access</p> <p>Research required to identify the best-fit framework</p>	<p>Pre-qualification already completed</p> <p>Can accommodate JCT/NEC contract terms</p> <p>Shorter timescale (8–12 weeks from issue of brief)</p>	<p>Council eligibility to use the identified framework must be confirmed</p>
Option 3 Direct Award via Framework	<p>Council bound by framework contract terms</p> <p>Excludes all non-framework suppliers</p> <p>Requires internal governance sign-off and benchmarking evidence of value for money</p> <p>External funders may require a formal business case</p> <p>Transparency and fairness concerns raised</p>	<p>Pre-qualification already completed</p> <p>Timescale of 8–12 weeks from issue of brief</p> <p>Could enable continuity with the current architect (subject to supplier signing up to framework terms)</p>	<p>Council eligibility to use identified framework must be confirmed</p>

Comparison table detailing the key advantages, disadvantages, and considerations of all three procurement routes. Compiled by Steve Sandercock.



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## Discussion at the Procurement Meeting (24 March 2026)

An online procurement meeting was held on 24 March 2026, attended by James Brigden, Kim Martin, Sam Tate, and Robert Miall along with our selected procurement specialist Steve Sandercock. The meeting considered the three options in detail, with the following key points arising from discussion:

### Transparency as a Primary Objective

The group identified transparency as the primary objective for the procurement route. Concerns were raised regarding the reputational and governance risks associated with direct appointments, given the level of scrutiny this project is expected to attract. The group agreed that the procurement approach must be one that can withstand challenge from funders, auditors, and the wider public.

### Framework Routes Discussed

Frameworks such as Constellia and Bloom Services were discussed as compliant routes that could streamline the process. However, it was noted that access under these frameworks would be limited to their appointed suppliers, which would likely exclude the current architect and restrict wider market competitiveness. Attendees agreed this was a material limitation given the transparency objective.

### Direct Appointment Ruled Out

A direct award route was explored but was not taken forward. While it offered potential continuity with the current architect and a faster timeline, the group concluded that the absence of competition would require additional governance justification and would carry a heightened perception risk. The meeting agreed this approach was not appropriate for this project.

### Pre-Application Work

The group confirmed that pre-application work already completed by the current architect would be used as an input into the new procurement process, forming part of the brief and project information provided to tendering parties.

### Timeframe

It was acknowledged that Option 1 would extend the procurement timeline by approximately two months compared to a framework-based route. The group agreed this trade-off was acceptable to prioritise getting the process right, maintain public confidence, and protect the Council's governance position.

### Design and Build Approach

As part of broader discussion on route to market, the option of a design-and-build tender was raised. Given the early stage of the project's design development, this approach was assessed as unsuitable: insufficient design certainty at this stage would likely result in suppliers pricing in significant risk contingency, increasing costs. The scale of the project was also considered too small to make a design-and-build approach efficient.

## Recommended Procurement Route — Option 1 Selected

Following assessment of all three options and the discussion at the 24 March 2026 meeting, the group agreed that Option 1 - an Open Procedure via the Find a Tender service under the Procurement Act 2023 - is the preferred and recommended procurement route.

The rationale for this selection is as follows:

- Option 1 provides the highest level of transparency and is the most defensible approach in the event of challenge from funders, auditors, or public interest parties.
- It ensures full market access, enabling all eligible suppliers to compete, and delivers the best conditions for competitive tension and value for money.

## Recommendation

Councillors are asked to note and endorse the selection of Option 1 - Open Procedure via Find a Tender under the Procurement Act 2023 - as the procurement route for the appointment of a professional services team for the Florence Park Community Centre project.

Councillors are asked to approve the release of funds up to £150,000 for the next project stage. This figure represents 50% of the professional services plus contingency funds, with the additional funds to be funded by the Sea Cadets.