

# *'Optimising Outcomes from Procurement and Partnering for Covid-19 and Beyond: Lessons from the Crisis'*

UKRI-funded Research Project

Dr. Richard Simmons

[r.a.simmons@stir.ac.uk](mailto:r.a.simmons@stir.ac.uk)

UNIVERSITY of  
STIRLING



Economic  
and Social  
Research Council



Northumbria  
University  
NEWCASTLE

CIPFA



# UKRI Research Project - Why and why now?

- Power and potential of procurement to deliver outcomes for communities
- Annually: £100bn capital and revenue across the UK (47% of total expenditure)
- Improve outcomes, add value and enhance the recovery
- Covid-19 imperatives:
  - *keep members of the community safe*
  - *ensure the continuity of services*
  - *support the local economy*
  - *promote green recovery*

# UKRI Research Project - Why and why now?

- Commissioning, procurement and contract management as an end-to-end process
- Opportunities to add, retain or lose value throughout in achieving outcomes
- Combine capabilities within the local authority and between the public, private and third sectors
- Even a 1% uplift in value across £100bn spend would provide a huge boost for local government
- Covid-19 as an opportunity to review and learn?
  - *Strategic, 'entrepreneurial', relational, data and data analytics*

# UKRI Research Project - How and with who?

- Everybody in! Lots of opportunities for people to get involved
- What we are doing:
  - *Surveys – national consultation survey, future trends and applications*
  - *Interviews – across the ‘ecosystem’*
  - *Case studies*
  - *Data queries*
  - *Impact tool*
- Partners and involvement
  - *Across local government and broader public sector*
  - *Private and third sectors*
  - *Keen to learn from different approaches – four nations of the UK*

# Research Themes: Survey

- Crisis effects
- Role of procurement
- Procurement outcomes
- Enablers: *strategic, 'entrepreneurial', relational, data*
- Crisis and broader outcomes for communities
- Learning for the future

# Crisis Effects

- Disruption
- Scaling up/scaling down
- Financial pressure
- Ability/willingness to pay
- Outsourcing/Insourcing
- Extending, varying contracts
- Use of frameworks

# Role of Procurement

- Proficiency, Workload pressure
- Relationship between commissioning and procurement teams
- Involvement in strategic decision making
- Performed well
- Potential not always fully utilised

# Procurement Outcomes

- Difficulty of getting what you need when you need it, keeping costs down, maintaining quality, avoiding taking on additional risk, adding social value
- How this has been possible: maintaining quality, costs manageable, getting what is needed quickly, managing risk, *adding social value*
- Trade offs: Cost, quality, speed, risk



# Enablers:

*strategic, 'entrepreneurial', relational, data*

- **Strategic**

- Strategic attention
- Flexible, adaptive
- Creative, innovation

- **Entrepreneurial**

- Market intelligence – inc. downstream
- Openness to working with new suppliers
- New suppliers, new things, local suppliers, VCSE

# Enablers:

*strategic, 'entrepreneurial', relational, data*

- **Relational**

- within local authority - better
- with suppliers – more attention to performance, quality of relationships positive, working in partnership
- with other contracting authorities (e.g. joint procurement)
- with other tiers of government

- **Data**

- Usefulness
- Application

# Crisis Outcomes

- Keeping people safe – *fighting the virus, protecting vulnerable people*
- Ensuring continuity of services
- Supporting the local economy
- Promoting green recovery – esp. net zero
- Complex projects

# UKRI Research Project - What and where?

- Where we have come from, where we are now, where we are going?
- Link in with other work to think about these issues - for procurement, but also more broadly end-to-end in terms of future directions in local government
- 'Learning lessons from the crisis' > sharing widely
  - *Resources for policy learning and practice development*
  - *Partner training opportunities*