

## The Challenge

An authority in the North West of England engaged Ameo to review its procurement and commissioning arrangements, with the goal of harmonising practice across its various functions.

The Council did not have a structure for managing contracts. Instead, each team was responsible for its own arrangements. The organisation had tended to operate as a collection of small businesses, each with its own processes, which had led to differing practices across the organisation. Some functions were managing all their contracts in house, while others were paying for professional support.

## The Outcome

Our consultants developed a Commissioning Maturity Model, which fundamentally changed the way the Council managed its contracts. This was accomplished in only four weeks.

The model includes new governance processes and allows benchmarking between this authority and others.

Our model was accompanied by a set of suggested actions, such as the setting up of a commissioning group to allow Council departments to share good practice and good people.

The Council has used the model to identify adult care as its top transformation priority. This function accounts for almost half the Council's budget.

## The Engagement

Our Commissioning Maturity Model (CMM) was the first of its kind to be developed in the UK. It looks at procurement and commissioning as a single, end-to-end business process, with outcomes clearly defined at each stage. It allows benchmarking, both between functions and against other authorities and organisations.

To develop the model, our consultants held interviews and conducted research with departments and customers across the organisation. We rated each department against sixty behavioural indicators, placing each on a scale between 'no evidence' and 'best practice'. This enabled direct comparison of the contract management capabilities of functions such as social care and housing.

The client had a procurement team but no contract team. This was a particular issue for arm's length organisations, which were treated as if they were part of the Council when, in fact, their needs were closer to those of a supplier. The CMM set governance arrangements for these organisations.

To date, the CMM has been employed to benchmark the Council against five other local authorities. The results have been used to realign priorities.