

# Procurement Update

## Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel

16<sup>th</sup> September 2025

Bath & North East  
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives



## Procurement Act 2023 – Update

- Came into force 24th February 2025
- Previous legislation still applies to processes commenced prior to Feb 24<sup>th</sup> and for contracts let under the previous regime
- Busy, challenging period for the Procurement Team, preparing for go-live
- Overlap with delivery of the Procurement Strategy and particularly the work on Supplier and Contract Management
- Not all expected changes have been enacted as yet
- More changes to come
- Also working to the Provider Selection Regime – for Healthcare Services

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## Procurement Act - Key Deliverables

- Completion of Procurement Act 2023 Training – Cabinet Office delivered
- Central Digital Platform registration and set up
- Integration of our e-tendering system with the Central Digital Platform
- Review of our e-tendering system to ensure PA23 requirements built into process, including publication of a range of additional notices
- Intranet Pages updated to reflect changes – publication of PA23 guidance documents
- Internal templates produced / updated for procurement activity
- Review of standard terms and conditions with legal team – to reflect PA23 implied terms
- Pipeline publication on Central Digital Platform

## Procurement Act – Ongoing

- Publication of payments compliance information and payments over £30k (requirement not yet in force)
- Review of Supplier and Contract Management processes – ensure ability to publish mandatory notices and comply with requirements throughout the contract lifecycle
- Identification of future contracts over £5m – in order to plan for performance reporting / publication of contract requirements
- Ongoing publication of Central Digital Platform Pipeline – for activity over £2m
- Duty to remove barriers to SMEs - ITT / quote documents reviewed, recent CSO changes support simpler processes at higher values. Other SME barriers will need to be considered for each procurement
- Ensuring considered design of procurement activity to ensure PA23 compliance and that flexibilities are being harnessed, where appropriate

# Procurement Reform Consultation

- Consultation on further procurement reform has recently taken place
- Focused on 'growing British industry, jobs and skills'
- Aim: to create a simpler and more transparent regime for public sector procurement that delivers better value for money, drives economic growth, and safeguards national interests
- Proposals included:
  - Setting targets for procurement spend with SMEs and VCSEs – annual reporting against these targets
  - Extending requirements around prompt payment and payment transparency to **all** payments – regardless of value and whether the contract was above or below the PA23 threshold
  - Excluding suppliers from bidding (above £5m contracts) if they cannot demonstrate prompt payment to supply chains
  - Increased flexibility for people-focused services (i.e. social care) – allowing award without competition in wider circumstances
  - An obligation to undertake and publish a public interest test when making decisions around insourcing or outsourcing
  - Streamlining of standard national social value criteria – focussing on jobs, opportunities or skills
  - Setting of a minimum weighting to social value and one SV KPI relating to jobs, opportunities or skills in major contracts (over £5m)
- Consultation period closed early September – formal response expected within a couple of months
- May result in Government introducing legislation to amend the Act and introduction of minor technical amendments to the Act

# Procurement Strategy Update

- Revised Procurement Strategy approved at Cabinet September 2024
- Came into force 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024
- Despite resourcing challenges and a focus on Procurement Act implementation we have made some good progress against our delivery plan
- Identified a number of activities which we would seek to deliver 'As Soon As Practically Possible'
- More to be delivered over the coming 6-12 months

## Procurement Strategy – Good Progress

- Reviewed and updated the Contract Standing Orders – came into force 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025
- Gateways / Commissioning Plans / Procurement Plans – built into revised CSOs, working with Business Change in roll out of gateways
- Invitation to Tender templates reviewed for ease of use / accessibility for SMEs
- Ongoing work with the sustainability team regarding minimum standards for goods, works and services
- Collation of pipeline – internet version (above £100k) has been updated, and PA23 version (above £2m) published in May
- SPT development for PA23 – ongoing, will continue to engage with Cabinet Office delivered training and development sessions, plus webinars offered by legal firms etc
- Engaging local supply market – recent CSO changes encourage engagement of local suppliers and a more straightforward invited quotes process (increased threshold)

# Procurement Strategy – Next 6+ Months

- Review of the Council's Social Value Policy
  - Progress made in trialling a new approach in recent tenders
  - Approach to be reviewed, reflected and adjusted
  - Work with other service areas to identify local social value priorities
  - Develop revised policy and accompanying officer guidance
- Supplier and Contract Management
  - Procurement Manager and Senior Procurement Officer roles focussing on Supplier and Contract Management now in post
  - Current focus is on understanding the Council's current position and planning
  - B&NES standard approach and tools are being developed
  - Plan for rolling out a Contract Management Framework now in place