

Procurement Act Live!

Essential tips for Justice
and Emergency Services
suppliers

April 2025

'I highly recommend the "Procurement Act Live!" It provides clear guidance for suppliers in the Justice and Emergency Services sector, emphasising transparency, accessibility for SMEs, and the importance of social value in procurement decisions. This document is essential for anyone involved in navigating the new procurement landscape effectively and is a credit to TechUK'

Stephan Chyriwsky, Deputy Director – Strategic Partnering Programme,
Cabinet Office.

'It reads really well and complements the Cabinet Office, covers links to places to find info and awakens SMEs to take action'

Shirley Cooper OBE, Crown Representative for Small Businesses

Why you need to read this

Most of us already know that the Procurement Act 2023 finally went live last month. It is one of the most heavily trailed pieces of legislation in recent years. There is plenty of material out there talking about it, so we wanted to provide a useful and concise summary of the key areas of impact for Justice and Emergency Service suppliers.

This guide, written by fellow tech providers from the Justice and Emergency Services sector, concentrates on the essential tips arising from the Procurement Act to help your organisation understand the key changes you may need to make and prosper under the new procurement regime. And if you prosper, then the chances are that client organisations and society at large will benefit too.

Who are we?

We are the Procurement sub-group, part of the [Justice and Emergency Services Management Committee \(JESMC\)](#). We represent the full spectrum of techUK Justice and Emergency Services suppliers within the tech space, from very large global organisations all the way through to SMEs and start-ups. We are dedicated to fostering stronger collaboration between buyers and suppliers, promoting closer partnership, effectively communicating stakeholder challenges to the tech sector, and helping our industry drive positive impact.

When we work on our JESMC mission we leave our business cards outside the room!

Procurement Act – big deal?

The Procurement Act has effectively rebooted the approach to public sector procurement. Born out of a need to replace legacy EU legislation, and to address some of the long-standing challenges that we are all-too familiar with, the Act has reviewed and refreshed all areas of the procurement lifecycle. Not only does this make it a big deal, but so does the effort put in by Government to ensure that all public sector buying organisations understand the new legislation and that suppliers also appreciate how the Act is intended to operate.

Rarely has there been such a concerted effort to familiarise stakeholders with a new/revised piece of legislation, and it certainly represents an opportunity for organisations to reset their own approach to procurement interactions within the public sector.

A brief summary of the new Act

The new Act has several key impacts on suppliers within the Justice and Emergency Services market:

Greater Transparency: it emphasises transparency in procurement processes, which can lead to increased competition and fairer opportunities for all suppliers. This change aims to build trust and improve the public perception of procurement practices.

Streamlined Processes: it aims to simplify procurement procedures, making it easier for suppliers to understand and participate in bidding for contracts. This is intended to reduce the administrative burden on both suppliers and public sector buyers.

Increased Access for SMEs: it encourages the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which could lead to more diverse suppliers in the Justice and Emergency Services sector. This should hopefully encourage innovation and cost-effectiveness.

Focus on Community Benefits: it introduces requirements for considering social value in procurement decisions. Suppliers will need to demonstrate how their services contribute to community goals, potentially influencing contract outcomes.

Enhanced Supplier Compliance: it includes increased obligations on suppliers to comply with regulations, including sustainability and ethical sourcing standards, which may require adaptations in their operations and practices.

Contract Management Improvements: it includes new measures for effective contract management which should result in better performance monitoring and accountability of suppliers, ultimately impacting how services are delivered.

Overall, the new Procurement Act aims to create a more equitable and efficient procurement environment, which will likely reshape the landscape for suppliers in the Justice and Emergency Services market. Suppliers may need to adapt their approaches to align with these new legislative requirements and opportunities.

So, what are our 7 essential tips?

1. Educate yourself and your organisation

This is the “tip of tips” and to some extent is repeated within the following tips. It’s really important that you and the relevant people within your organisation understand the Act and figure out how to embrace it. So, invest some time reviewing the various materials ([this guide is a useful starting point](#) -), confirm your understanding and develop your strategy ahead of your first procurement under the new Act.

The rest of the tips section provides some educational specifics, plus a general tip at the end which provides some useful general resources.

2. Understand transparency

Perhaps one of the strongest aspects, and most advantageous to suppliers, of the Act is its emphasis on transparency. Transparency emerges in many forms, but essentially it means that unprecedented levels of openness are to be expected from buying organisations. Whether it’s up-front publishing of procurement pipelines, planned

procurement notices, pre-tender market engagement or sharing of information via the new single Central Digital Platform, the Act seeks to create an environment of transparency by default.

This is something we encourage all suppliers to understand and use – indeed, we highly recommend all suppliers to register on the CDP ([Suppliers: How to register your organisation and first administrator on Find a Tender in three easy steps \(HTML\) - GOV.UK](#)) as you will rarely see anything like this level of openness within the private sector and it's a real source of insight when identifying your strategic direction.

3. Understand procurement procedures

Whereas there used to be six different procurement procedures, there are now only two – “open” and “competitive flexible”:

Open procedures remain single stage procedures and, as the name suggests, have no restriction on who can submit tenders provided they satisfy any stipulated “conditions of participation” (formerly known as selection criteria).

The competitive flexible procedure (CFP) is quite innovative, providing buyers with the opportunity to construct bespoke procurement pathways where requirements might be complex or specialised, or where a large market exists. Interestingly, the CFP also allows for dialogue and negotiation as well as the introduction of other steps that could allow for, say, the production of a “proof of concept” as part of the procurement process. Whilst this flexibility is to be applauded, time will tell us all how well it works in practice.

4. SMEs – be bold!

Rippling through the Act, and in keeping with the Government agenda, is a duty to consider SMEs. The procurement procedures and the transparency points mentioned above are evidence of this, as is the duty to consider lots within procurements so as not to impede the participation of SMEs in a procurement exercise in any way.

As an industry group, we consider this is a very positive step that will encourage participation of SMEs within a broader landscape of suppliers, either individually or as part of a group.

It is important that SMEs understand how the Act is constructed to encourage consideration of their participation, and that you as SMEs tune your work-winning efforts accordingly.

5. Don't let your clients down

Well, this might sound obvious! However, the Act has brought with it a sharper focus on poor performance of suppliers and a regime for debarring suppliers on the grounds of performance. Further, a dedicated Procurement Review Unit (PRU) came into force to coincide with the launch of the Act. The PRU provides resources to run debarment investigations and to manage a published debarment list. So, make sure you are fully prepared to deliver at least what you commit to and avoid being an unwelcome addition to this list!

Obviously, as an industry group we actively encourage high standards of performance. This part of the Act should introduce an extra incentive to do so!

6. Set up simple intelligence gathering mechanisms

The new Central Digital Platform (CDP) is an extension of the current Find-a-tender service and is designed as a one-stop-shop for information on procurement activities. This means that any supplier can build an effective intelligence gathering system with basic (and free!) techniques based around internet searches and signing up to the new Platform.

The transparency obligations of the Act should also mean that you can track notices from organisations of interest using tools like Google Alerts in ways that will enable you to plan your work-winning efforts and prepare your resources in anticipation of invitations to tender landing.

Beyond these simple tools and techniques, you can consider the impressive services offered by the likes of Tussell, Stotles and GlobalData; all of whom ingest this body of information and present it within their own platforms in ways you can customise and tailor to your own organisation's preferences.

Set yourself up for success!

7. Know where to look for insight and support

There is an abundance of information on the Act, so we have cherry-picked what we believe to be the most useful resources for insight and support on your journey towards success with the Act and its procurement processes. And it's a shout out to Cabinet Office, as their materials remain the most comprehensive and accessible resources out there. Of course, as the Act engrains itself into the pattern of daily life these resources will develop but this should stand you in good stead from the outset:

Cabinet Office slides – "[Get ready for go live!](#)" – is a really useful source of information and guides around all things Procurement Act, esp. slide 23 with links to other resources such as videos, manuals, and sample templates.

techUK has also provided information and content on the Procurement Act. Here you can find an overview of the [Act from Blue Light Commercial](#) and a list of [essential Information and Strategic Policy Highlights](#).

Conclusion

The new Act is one of the most important pieces of government legislation to impact industry in a long time. The clear intent is to address some of the challenges inherent in the existing arrangements and enhance outcomes for all. We strongly encourage you to spend time understanding and engaging with the new regime.

We hope you find this short guide useful. For more information on the role and the priorities of the JESMC and the Justice and Emergency Services programme, please visit our [website](#).

Further information

techUK

techUK is a membership organisation launched in 2013 to champion the technology sector and prepare and empower the UK for what comes next. It is the UK's leading technology membership organisation, with more than 1,020 members spread across the UK. We are a network that enables our members to learn from each other and grow in a way which contributes to the country both socially and economically.

By working collaboratively with government and others, we provide expert guidance and insight for our members and stakeholders about how to prepare for the future, anticipate change and realise the positive potential of technology in a fast-moving world.

Justice and Emergency Services (JES) Programme

The [Justice and Emergency Services programme](#) provides a forum for Justice and public safety stakeholders from national policing bodies, local forces, fire and rescue and justice partners, to collaborate with tech industry.

The programme serves as a platform for exploring the latest innovations, discussing challenges, and building networks while advocating for the role of technology in enhancing public safety services. The programme has a number of working groups that facilitate regular collaboration between the public and private sectors.

Groups include Digital Justice, Driving Interoperability in Policing, Public Safety and Security SME Forum, Fire Innovation Forum, VAWG and RASSO Tech Working Group.

JES Management Committee

The JES programme is overseen by an elected board of 28 techUK members responsible for setting its strategic direction. The committee has identified three key priorities for their 2024/2026 tenure: Demystifying AI, Digital Skills, and Procurement.



linkedin.com/company/techuk



youtube.com/user/techUKViews



[@techuk.bsky.social](https://techuk.bsky.social)



info@techuk.org