



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is the Procurement Act 2023 and how does it affect businesses?

The Procurement Act 2023, which came into effect on 24th February 2025, replaces the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and introduces more transparency on how public bodies buy goods, services and works.

Key changes and Business Impacts:

- **Simplified procedures:** Only two types - Open Procedure and Competitive Flexible Procedure.
- **Support for SMEs:** Encourages breaking contracts into smaller lots and reducing barriers to entry.
- **Faster payments:** 30-day payment terms for suppliers and subcontractors.
- **New procurement models:** Framework Agreements, Dynamic Markets, and Open Framework Agreements.
- **Performance accountability:** Includes KPIs and a Central Debarment List.
- **Greater transparency:** Mandatory feedback and new notice types

What are the changes under the new Procurement Act?

The UK Procurement Act 2023, which came into force on 24 February 2025, marks a major overhaul of public procurement rules across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. It replaces the EU-derived regulations with a more streamlined, flexible framework designed to improve efficiency, transparency, and accessibility in public sector contracting.

Simplified Procurement Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fewer routes to market: The Act consolidates complex procedures into a more flexible set of options, making it easier for contracting authorities to choose the most suitable approach.• Open and competitive tendering is emphasized, with clearer rules for direct awards and negotiated procedures.
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Stronger Exclusion Grounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction of a “debarment list”: Suppliers who breach certain standards (e.g. corruption, poor performance) can be excluded from future contracts.• Expanded criteria for excluding bidders, including ethical and performance-related grounds.
Enhanced Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mandatory publication of key documents throughout the procurement lifecycle:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Pipeline Notices for upcoming projects◦ Contract Award Notices◦ Contract Performance Reports• Greater visibility into how public money is spent, including in-life contract management.
National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sets out strategic priorities like supporting small businesses, promoting social value, and achieving net zero goals.• Contracting authorities must “have regard” to these priorities in their procurement decisions. <p>National Procurement Policy Statement - GOV.UK</p>
Support for SMEs and Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Easier access for small businesses and social enterprises to compete for public contracts.• Relaxation of rules around supplier location and social value to support local economies
Transition Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Procurements started before 24 February 2025 continue under the old regime.• The Act is not retrospective, so existing contracts and procedures remain unaffected.



What are the different notices and when are they published?

Under the Procurement Act 2023, the UK has introduced a more transparent and structured approach to public procurement, with a suite of new notices that must be published at various stages of the procurement lifecycle. Here's a breakdown of the key notices and their timing:

Pre-Procurement Notices

These help signal upcoming opportunities and market engagement

Notice	Who/When	Purpose
Pipeline Notice (UK1)	Who: Authorities with other £100 million anticipated spend	Lists expected procurements over £2 million
Preliminary Market Engagement (PME) Notice (UK2)	When: Before publishing a Tender Notice	Indicates intent to engage the market before formal procurement
Planned Procurement Notice (UK3) *Optional*	When: Before the Tender Notice	Alerts suppliers to upcoming tenders and can shorten tendering periods.

Procurement Stage Notices

These are central to launching and managing the tender process

Notice	Who/When	Purpose
Tender Notice (UK4) *Mandatory*	When: To start a competitive procurement	Invites suppliers to submit tenders or requests to participate



Transparency Notice (UK5) <i>*Mandatory in special cases*</i>	When: For direct awards or when a competitive procedure fails	Justifies direct award decisions
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Post-Procurement Notices

These wrap up the process and provide accountability

Notice	Who/When	Purpose
Contract Award Notice (UK6) <i>*Mandatory*</i>	When: After awarding a contract	Discloses who won and key contract details
Contract Details Notice (UK7)	When: After contract award	Provides full contract terms and performance expectations
Procurement Termination Notice (UK12)	When: if a procurement is abandoned after a Tender or Transparency Notice	Explains why the process was halted
Contract termination Notice (UK11)	When: Must be published after a tender or transparency notice has been issued but before the contract is signed.	To inform suppliers and the public that a procurement process has been discontinued

These notices are published on a **central digital platform**.



How do we work with Wigan Council?

Wigan Council does not operate an Approved Suppliers List. Instead, suppliers engage with the Council through procurement opportunities advertised on The Chest Procurement Portal. We recognise that this process may be unfamiliar to some supplier hence, the Wigan Council Procurement Team being at the Believe in Business Festival today to assist.

Where do we now advertise tender opportunities?

Wigan Council promotes transparency and accessibility in its procurement process. Suppliers can find current and upcoming tender opportunities through the following platforms:

1. **Wigan Council's Procurement webpage**

This is the central hub for information on the Council's Missions, procurement strategy, and guidance for suppliers.

<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Business/Council-Procurement/index.aspx>

2. **E-procurement portal - The Chest**

The Chest is the main portal used by Wigan Council to advertise tenders and manage supplier submissions. It also hosts opportunities from other public sector bodies.

3. **Central Digital Platform (CDP)**

The Central Digital Platform is the national platform for suppliers to register and upload key business information. While Wigan Council will continue to use The Chest for tendering, suppliers will also need to register on the CDP to streamline submissions and meet new regulatory requirements under the Procurement Act 2023.

Do we have a list of upcoming tenders and Frameworks?

Yes, we have a Procurement Pipeline that is situated on the Council's website and can be accessed via: www.wigan.gov.uk/Business/Council-Procurement/businessandtendering.aspx



How do you decide upon your Procurement Strategy for Contracts?

Wigan Council uses a Thinking Tool to shape the procurement strategy for each tender. This tool helps assess key factors such as available budget, contract start and end dates, nature of the market, is the contract driven by quality or cost leadership and alignment with the Council's Missions.

Where appropriate, the Council also conducts Pre-Market Engagement with suppliers which will then inform the procurement strategy for each tender opportunity.

What is Pre-Market Engagement?

Pre-Market Engagement sometimes called *Preliminary Market Engagement* is a process used by public sector buyers to consult with suppliers before formally launching a procurement.

Under the UK Procurement Act 2023, it plays a crucial role in shaping smarter, fairer, and more transparent procurement decisions.

What happens:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To understand market capabilities• To refine requirements• To encourage innovation and fair competition• Gives suppliers potential opportunity to co-design services with Wigan Council
How it works:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Buyers may host events, send questionnaires, or meet suppliers• A notice is usually published to invite participation• Engagement must be fair and transparent
Why it matters for Businesses:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early insight into upcoming contracts• Opportunity to influence specifications• Chance to build relationships with buyers

Pre-Market engagement notices are published on the Central Digital Platform.



How has your tender pack changed?

We are currently identifying opportunities to reduce the size of tender packs wherever possible. In line with this, we are working to make tendering with the Council as cheap, easy and risk free as possible.

Is help available with submitting a Tender?

Yes. Wigan Council have developed 'How to Guides' to assist suppliers in registering and using both the Central Digital Platform and The Chest for submitting bids.

We strongly recommend allowing yourself plenty of time to prepare and submit your tender to ensure everything is completed accurately and on time.

Can we use AI?

Yes, you can use AI to assist you in completing your tender submissions, but we would need you to declare that you have used it and how that you have used it.

We also accept with the use of AI with service delivery but again we would need you to declare how this is used.

As with utilising AI in general, please note that it is not always necessarily accurate with the information that it provides so we would strongly suggest that you thoroughly proofread.

Do we need a certain insurance threshold?

Wigan Council expects suppliers to maintain appropriate insurance coverage for the duration of any contract. This could include for example:

- Public Liability Insurance
- Employer's Liability Insurance
- Professional Indemnity Insurance
- Medical Malpractice Insurance



The specific thresholds (i.e. minimum cover amounts) can vary depending on the nature and risk profile of the contract. These are detailed in the tender documents or specification.

What is Social Value? How can we enhance Social Value?

Social value refers to the broader impact that procurement decisions can have on society, the economy, and the environment. It's about using purchasing power to deliver benefits that go beyond the goods or services being bought.

In the UK, especially under the **Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012**, public sector organisations are required to consider how their procurement can improve:

- **Economic well-being** (e.g. supporting local SMEs or job creation)
- **Social well-being** (e.g. promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion)
- **Environmental sustainability** (e.g. reducing carbon footprint or waste)

Wigan Council has adopted a mission-driven approach to procurement, which emphasises the importance of social value in evaluating tenders. This approach includes setting a 15% weighting for social value in the evaluation of contracts, ensuring that procurement decisions contribute positively to the community. The council's strategy aims to tackle local inequalities and promote sustainable economic growth by prioritising social, economic and environmental benefits in its procurement.

What happens if I am successful?

If your tender submission is successful, you will initially receive an Assessment Summary or Tender Outcome Letter. This provides feedback on your submission and highlights any lessons learned for future opportunities.

Following this, the Council will observe an 8-day standstill period before any contract can be formally awarded.



Once the standstill period has passed, successful suppliers will be invited to a pre-contract / mobilisation meeting with the relevant Contract Manager. This meeting will cover key aspects of the contract and include arrangements for signing of the contract.

If successful with a bid, how soon do we start?

All contracts differ thus mobilising a contract varies in terms of duration, on average after contract award please allow for a three-month contract mobilisation stage with Wigan Council before starting the new contract.

How do we start the process for TUPE?

You will have received relevant TUPE information as part of the tender pack. You will need to engage with the incumbent provider to arrange the mobilisation of TUPE.

We recommend seeking legal advice should TUPE apply.

What support is available to them throughout the lifetime of the contract?

Contract Management

- Contract manager as main point of contact
- Regular performance reviews/meetings to help ensure delivery against KPIs / Services Specification

Partnership and Collaboration

- Progress with Unity

Social Value Partnership and Collaboration



What happens if I am unsuccessful?

If your submission is unsuccessful, you will receive an Assessment Summary or Tender Outcome Letter. This will provide feedback on your submission and lessons learned for future opportunities with a specific focus on how it performed against the evaluation criteria including pricing, quality and social value.

This feedback is intended to help you understand how your submission was assessed and to support improvements for future opportunities.

If we don't win the main tender, how do we enter the successful supplier's supply chain?

If your organisation is not successful in winning the main contract, there may still be opportunities to engage with the successful supplier as part of their supply chain. While Wigan Council does not typically manage or mandate the composition of a prime contractor's supply chain, it does encourage collaborative working and transparency.

Once the contract is awarded and a Contract Award Notice has been published, you may wish to proactively contact the successful supplier to express your interest in becoming a subcontractor or supply partner.

Additionally, some prime contractors may advertise subcontracting opportunities or host supplier engagement events. Keep an eye on relevant portals or networks where these might be promoted.

Finally, stay connected with Wigan Council. New opportunities will continue to arise.

We work in Wigan so why aren't we awarded any work with Wigan Council?

Suppliers whether in the borough or not, work with Wigan Council by being successful in tendering opportunities.



There is no approved supplier list, Wigan Council spends public money, thus as a responsibility to ensure value for money in the contracts it procures.

In line with our contract procedure rules, we must adhere to the following:

CPR Thresholds		
Value	Procurement Route	Required method for communicating the opportunity
£1 - £29,999.99	Minimum one written quote	No requirement to use the chest
£30,000 - £74,999.99	Minimum three quotes	The Chest and Find a Tender Service
£75,000 – the PA thresholds	Open tender	The Chest and Find a Tender Service
Above the PA thresholds	Procurement in accordance with the Open Procedure or the Competitive Flexible Procedure	The Chest and Find a Tender Service

What are procurement thresholds?

Procurement thresholds are financial limits that determine when public sector contracts must follow formal procurement procedures under the Procurement Act 2023. These thresholds help ensure transparency, fairness, and compliance with both UK law and international obligations.

Contracts **above thresholds** must follow more rigorous procedures, including publishing notices and applying specific rules. Contracts **below thresholds** are subject to lighter-touch requirements, though still governed by Part 6 of the Act.

Current Thresholds valid until 31st December 2025 - (All values include VAT)



Contract Type	Threshold
Central Government (e.g. NHS) – Goods & Services	£139,688
Sub-Central Authorities (e.g. Local Authorities) – Goods & Services	£214,904
Works Contracts (any authority)	£5,372,609
Light Touch – Services & Suppliers	£663,540
Concession Contracts – Works & Services	£5,372,609
Concession Contracts – Light Touch	£5,372,609

FAQ's for Find a Tender Platform

Is Find a Tender, the central digital platform, a brand new portal?

No, we have built new features and functionality into the existing Find a Tender service (<https://www.findtender.service.gov.uk>) that many suppliers and contracting authorities are already using. The new functionality came on-stream on 24 February 2025.

Will I need to bookmark a new website?

The new service is on (<https://www.findtender.service.gov.uk>) on GOV.UK - the same URL as the old Find a Tender. So you don't need to update any bookmarks or links you have saved, or that are in your organisation's procedure documents.

If I am already registered on Find a Tender pre implementation of PA23, will I need to re-register?

Yes, you will need to re-register and enter your organisation information at <https://www.findtender.service.gov.uk> - and if you use the same email



address, any saved searches from your old account will be pulled through to your new Find a Tender account.

Is Find a Tender, the central digital platform, still free to use?

Yes. Find a Tender is free to use for everyone. There are no charges, and you should not pay to view opportunities in the public sector.

When can I register?

You can register now. But you only need to register at the point that you want to bid for a contract.