

**Public Procurement: Growing British industry, jobs and skills - consultation on further reforms to public procurement**  
**August 2025**

*1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that mandating large contracting authorities with spend over £100m p.a. to set 3-year targets for their procurement spend with SMEs and VCSEs and publish annual progress against these targets, would help increase spend with SMEs and VCSEs?*

Agree

*If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]*

The proposal is likely to increase spend with SMEs and VCSEs on the principle that what is inspected is more likely to be accomplished, however we note the statement in the consultation document that no financial penalties will be imposed where the target is missed, and as such we would question how public bodies are otherwise to be held accountable for their performance. Moreover, we would note that a target to increase spend with SMEs and VCSEs does not in itself address those businesses' own supply chains. Are the businesses that win contracts sourcing their supplies from SMEs or VCSEs and/or from British or local firms? A contract for the supply of food, for example, could be awarded to a local SME which nevertheless imports most or all the foodstuffs it goes on to supply from abroad. The Countryside Alliance wants to see the public purse support the procurement and supply of more British and local food, supporting the government's target of at least 50% of public expenditure on food procuring produce that is local or produced to higher environmental standards.

*2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that extending the requirements of section 70 of the Act to publish information on (i) all payments made under public contracts and (ii) payments under notifiable below-threshold contracts, would help increase spend with SMEs and VCSEs?*

Agree

*If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]*

There may be a case for a de minimis exemption, but if the automation systems the consultation document describes work efficiently enough to eliminate non-trivial effort in reporting, this would likely be unnecessary.

*3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that requiring contracting authorities to exclude suppliers from bidding on major contracts (+£5m per annum) if they cannot demonstrate prompt payment of invoices to their supply chains (within an average of 60 days) would help improve late payment by suppliers to the public sector?*

Agree

*If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]*

The policy intent is to incentivise prompt payment for the benefit of businesses' suppliers, and we support this measure as a means of achieving it. We would question how businesses will be expected to demonstrate their performance on this test. We also suggest that, once an appropriate period has passed, there should be a 'route back' to eligibility for procurement contracts for businesses that fail the test but subsequently change their business practices to move into compliance. This would incentivise improvement by poor performers.

*4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that there should be flexibility for contracts for people focused services to be awarded without competition?*

[No response]

*If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]*

[No response]

*5. Are there other services delivered to vulnerable citizens (beyond adult and children's social care) that warrant procurement processes not permitted in the Procurement Act 2023? Please include i) the CPV code where possible and description of the services; ii) the nature of the problem faced; iii) the optimal policy solution(s). [NB 2000 character limit]*

[No response]

*If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]*

[No response]

6. Do you have any examples where people-focused services have been procured well? Do you have any suggestions for changes to the processes available under the Procurement Act or guidance that could improve procurement of these services? [NB 2000 character limit]

[No response]

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that contracting authorities should be required to undertake a public interest test and publish it when making sourcing decisions?

[No response]

If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]

[No response]

8. To what extent do you agree or disagree that requiring authorities to set an award criteria which relates to the quality of the supplier's contribution to jobs, opportunities or skills for all public contracts over £5m and with a minimum evaluation weighting of 10%, will help to deliver social value that supports economic growth?

Agree

If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]

As discussed above, awards criteria should include contributions made to jobs, opportunities or skills from other businesses in the contractor's supply chain so that effects on indirect employment, etc. can also be considered.

9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that, where authorities have set social value award criteria relating to jobs or skills, mandating that they also set at least one KPI on social value delivery, and subsequently report performance against a social value KPI (published in the contract performance notice), will support transparency of progress against social value commitments?

Agree

*If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]*

[No response]

*10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that requiring contracting authorities to use standard social value criteria and metrics selected from a streamlined list (to be co-designed with the public sector and suppliers) in their procurement of public contracts will help to deliver social value in a proportionate manner?*

Agree

*If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]*

We agree subject to the qualification that the criteria will be co-designed with suppliers, which we suggest should include representation from smaller and rural businesses. It is essential to ensure that SMEs and VCSEs can meet the criteria and that, where benefits are to be delivered in the supplier's locality, rural areas are not left behind.

*11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that contracting authorities should be permitted to define the geographical location of where social value will be delivered as described above? Do you have any suggestions for innovative ways of delivering social value including by creating more flexibility in the current requirements in the Act on relevance and proportionality?*

Agree

*If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]*

In addition to the above comments, it should be feasible for suppliers to cite benefits accruing within a wide area or in multiple locations. For instance, a contract for food supply that emphasises British produce could deliver benefits in multiple rural communities in diverse parts of the country.

[Respondents' details]