



Procurement Policy Note

The Commercial Playbooks

Action note: 011

Previously issued: November 2023

Updated: February 2025

Issue

1. The Cabinet Office produces Commercial Playbooks, and accompanying guidance notes, for commercial teams in order to improve decision-making and ensure the assessment, procurement and management of public services delivers better outcomes and value for money for the public.
2. The Playbooks aim to systematically change how government, and the public sector more widely, approaches risk, sustainability and innovation across portfolios of projects and programmes, with the goal of creating productive, profitable, sustainable and resilient sectors.
3. Adherence to the Playbooks is assured through existing governance arrangements, including Cabinet Office controls for in-scope organisations, and outline the government's expectations for how buyers and suppliers should engage with each other.
4. There are currently four Playbooks: Sourcing, Consultancy, Construction, and Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT). These are regularly refreshed to ensure the content is up to date and fit for purpose. New Playbooks may also be introduced in the future.
5. PPN 06/23 replaced and consolidated PPN 02/22, PPN 03/21, PPN 09/20 and PPN 05/20.

Dissemination and scope

6. This Procurement Policy Note (PPN) applies to all central government departments, their executive agencies and non-departmental public bodies when awarding public

contracts¹ for goods and/or services and/or works, other than special regime contracts.² Such bodies are referred to as 'in-scope organisations'.

7. The Playbooks and their associated guidance are considered good practice and other public sector organisations are encouraged to consider taking the suite of Playbooks into account as part of their commercial activities. Please circulate this PPN within your organisation, drawing it to the attention of those with a commercial and/or procurement role.
8. This PPN been updated to reflect new terminology introduced by the Procurement Act 2023 and the Procurement Regulations 2024. The Procurement Act 2023 and the Procurement Regulations 2024 applies to procurements commenced on or after 24 February 2025. For more detail on the meaning of 'commenced' please refer to the Procurement Act 2023 [Guidance on Transitional and Savings Arrangements](#).
9. The Procurement Act 2023 does not apply to procurements commenced before 24 February 2025 or to contracts awarded prior to this date (including via frameworks, dynamic purchasing systems or qualification systems established under the previous legislation). For procurements commenced and contracts awarded before this date, please refer to PPN 06/23.
10. This update does not constitute a change in policy or a new call for action but in-scope organisations should continue to apply any ongoing obligations set out in the provisions of this PPN. In-scope organisations do not need to repeat actions which were required upon this PPN's initial publication.

Timing

11. In-scope organisations should note the provisions of this PPN from 24 February 2025.

Action

12. In-scope organisations should take action to apply the principles, rules and guidelines set out in the Playbooks and apply any future content that is produced as part of any updates to the Playbooks or their accompanying guidance notes.

Background

13. The original Outsourcing Playbook was launched in February 2019 in response to the challenges raised following the collapse of Carillion in January 2018. It was rebranded to the Sourcing Playbook in 2020 to better reflect the policy of choosing the appropriate approach to delivery models (be that insource, outsource, or a combination), to deliver high-quality public services.

¹ See section 3 of the Procurement Act 2023.

² See section 10(6) of the Procurement Act 2023

14. Following the success of the Outsourcing and then Sourcing Playbook, other Playbooks have been produced covering the Consultancy, Construction and DDaT sectors to provide specific policy and guidance for contracting in these areas.

Contact

15. For queries about the contents of the Playbooks or on their implementation, please contact markets-sourcing-suppliers@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.
16. General enquiries about this PPN can be directed to the Helpdesk on info@crowcommercial.gov.uk.