

# UKUPC

## UKUPC Update

### December 2024

UK Universities Purchasing Consortia

## General UKUPC Activity

### Joint Contracting Group (JCG)

The JCG continues to make progress with a new Chair (Lorraine Whelan, NEUPC) and Deputy Chair (Jasbinder Sandhu, LUPC) now leading the group. It's been a busy period for the JCG with several activities taking place.

#### **Framework Templates - PA23 Compatible**

New Framework templates are taking shape and are being reviewed by the team which will support all future relevant frameworks that fall under the forthcoming PA23 legislation. We will confirm to members once the templates are signed off and ready for use.

#### **UKUPC Protocol - Way of Working**

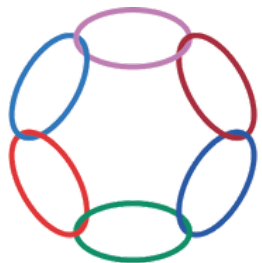
We are reviewing our national JCG ways of working by refreshing and updating our UKUPC protocol document. Updates linked to this review will feed into everything we do in a consistent way as we look towards 2025.

#### **National Category Groups**

A smaller group of JCG members are meeting in December to discuss a draft paper that discusses how our national category group structures currently work and explore how we continue to engage within these groups in the future. We hope to ensure our approach is streamlined, proactive and consistent. We will update members once this work is finalised and agreed later this year.

### Systems

The UKUPC Systems Group met online on the 1 October 2024. A brief review of the group strategy was undertaken with a first draft update subsequently circulated to the group for feedback. Additional discussions included future potential use of AI in recording of meeting minutes and tendering system readiness for PA23.



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## Hunter Transition

The main focus continues to be the migration of the English and Welsh Consortia from HEC to Hunter with fortnightly meetings continuing.

The Hunter Buyers portal is now live, and any members registered on HE Contracts have been emailed Login details for accessing Hunter. We are monitoring registrations.

You can view a recording of the Hunter Introduction here:

Level 1: View Only Access to Collaborative Agreements <https://youtu.be/R2LXV9rId4Y>

Level 2: Level 1 Access & Contract Uptake & Suite of Reports: <https://youtu.be/r39lIQDJD5Q>

Framework information, contacts and documentation have all been updated. Checks are ongoing to ensure the Quick Reference guide information is up to date and Keywords added to allow ease of searching are all to the required levels.

HEC will continue to function until the end of the year and from 2025, members will need to access framework documentation via Hunter.

For any issues with accessing Hunter or to set up new users for your organisation, please contact your regional consortium:

Consortium	Email
APUC	<a href="mailto:helpdesk@apuc-scot.ac.uk">helpdesk@apuc-scot.ac.uk</a>
HEPCW	<a href="mailto:helpdesk@apuc-scot.ac.uk">helpdesk@apuc-scot.ac.uk</a>
LUPC	<a href="#">Kai Osborne</a> or <a href="#">Joyce Kadri</a>
NEUPC	<a href="#">Andy Hughes</a>
NWUPC	<a href="mailto:Hunter@nwupc.ac.uk">Hunter@nwupc.ac.uk</a>
SUPC	<a href="#">Jess Tuthill</a>
TUCO	<a href="mailto:info@tuco.ac.uk">info@tuco.ac.uk</a>



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## **HESCET & Scope 3**

Members of the systems group have been involved in the review and feedback of the HESCET tool and the discussions on potential future changes. The tool to be used for producing the 23/24 reports has been tested and will be released by HEPA shortly.

## **Spend Analysis**

The spend analysis work conducted by the APUC on behalf of all consortia has now been concluded with reports now available through the Hunter Buyers Portal for members that submitted data.

## **Responsible Procurement**

The Responsible Procurement Network is working in line with its strategic themes:

- **Social Value/ Community Benefits**

Working on agreeing a standard methodology for identifying opportunities for social value/community benefit realisation in framework tenders & supporting delivery at call-off.

- **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and 3rd Sector**

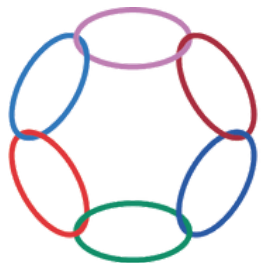
Research completed on UK policy requirements on access to opportunities for small and 3rd sector businesses. Please take five minutes to complete this [survey](#) on your organisation's approach to working with MSMEs to support the UKUPC MSMEs and 3rd Sector strategy.

- **Carbon Reduction:**

A draft Carbon reduction plan template, Carbon reduction plan guidance document for suppliers and Carbon reduction plan evaluation guidance for contract managers have been produced. These will be launched to members in the new year.

- **Circular Economy:**

Research is ongoing on the sector's use of circular economy aspects in conjunction with HEPA Circular Economy and Waste Group, with a focus on Laboratories and ICT.



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## Communications & Events

### Market Insight Documents

The quarterly Market Insight Documents were issued to members w/c 2 December. Please contact your regional consortium if you have not received yours.

### UKUPC Webinars

Following feedback from several members that have felt overwhelmed with PA23 focused training, it was agreed to pause the monthly **UKUPC PA23 webinar series** after the final one on 11 December, until there is a clearer understanding of future training needs. Some UPC consortia are providing their own bespoke sessions as requested and designed by their members. If you have any particular needs linked to PA23 training that is above and beyond Central Government offerings, please do discuss with your own consortium.

In October, NEUPC held two training sessions delivered by CIPFA for UKUPC members covering **risk management and assessment**.

Please email [Laura Haslin](#) if you would like to access the recordings and slides.

We are reverting to our standard monthly UKUPC webinars in 2025, covering key procurement areas of interest. NWUPC will be delivering the below webinar in February for UKUPC members:

#### **UKUPC webinar: The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill, also known as Martyn's Law. 4 February 2025 10.30-11.30**

##### **[Register here](#)**

UKUPC members are invited to join Weightmans LLP for an informative session on [The Terrorism \(Protection of Premises\) Bill](#), commonly referred to as Martyn's Law. This pivotal proposed legislation aims to strengthen security and preparedness at publicly accessible premises. Tailored for procurement and compliance professionals, the webinar will provide key insights to:

- Understand the core provisions and objectives of the bill.
- Assess its potential impact on premises management and operational compliance.
- Identify procurement considerations to meet legislative requirements.



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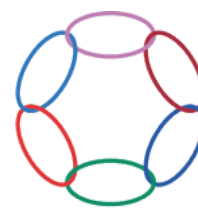
### **COUP/UKUPC Conference 2025**

APUC were due to deliver COUP (UKUPC Conference) in September 2025. They recently conducted a UK-wide survey with Heads of Procurement to assess the viability of the event, with concerns around ongoing funding issues and rising costs being a potential barrier to attendance. Realistic attendance looked to be only around 150 people, with a maximum optimistic estimate of 185 attendees, which is well below the target of 225-250 procurement professionals. Cost was cited as a major barrier, even with the event fee remaining the same as 14 years ago.

Given these challenges, the decision has been made to postpone the event until 2026, rather than holding a reduced and compromised event in 2025. A re-evaluation of the conference will occur in Spring 2025 to consider factors such as funding and sector support.

### **UKUPC Re-brand**

The Comms Group is working on re-branding UKUPC to make it more recognisable and for communications to have more impact. Watch this space!



# Transforming Public Procurement Activity

## Process

### Framework Terms and Conditions

UKUPC is actively preparing for the implementation of the new Procurement Act 2023. We've received the initial draft of the updated Framework Terms and Conditions, which now include important new schedules covering Cyber Security and Information Security. The ITT documents are due early December.

These drafts will undergo a collective review, and we'll continue collaborating with Brodies to finalise the terms. The completed versions are scheduled for launch in the New Year.

### Tender Documentation Templates for Members

LUPC is working with Brodies to produce Tender Documentation Templates for the new Procurement Regulations (PA23) for members of LUPC, NEUPC, NWUPC and SUPC. They will be available to download in **January 2025** from the respective Consortia websites behind the member login and include:

- 4.1.(a) Invitation to Tender Template (Open procedure under 2023 Act);
- 4.1.(b) Invitation to Participate Template (Competitive flexible procedure under 2023 Act);
- 4.2. Supplier Questionnaire under 2023 Act;
- 4.3.1.(a) Assessment summary under 2023 Act (unsuccessful)
- 4.3.1.(b) Assessment summary under 2023 Act (successful)
- 4.3.2. Award letter under 2023 Act.

A webinar will be arranged in the new year, details will be circulated in due course.

## People

### Procurement Pathway Toolkit

This is a reminder that the Cabinet Office (CO) has built a new tool, co-designed with central government departments, that brings together Procurement Policy Notes (PPNs), Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR), Procurement Act 2023 (PA23), commercial Playbooks and a suite of standard procurement templates; aligned to commercial stages across the end-to-end lifecycle.

[The Procurement Pathway toolkit is available here.](#) The Procurement Pathway (the 'tool') will be public-facing and signpost to existing commercial information, for which CO is responsible, published on GOV.UK. The tool is designed to complement, not replace, existing departmental toolkits.

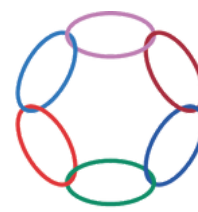


## UKUPC Procurement Act Webinar Series

The final webinar in the series *Social Value in the Procurement Act*, has been postponed until further notice. This is due to awaiting the new National Procurement Policy Statement which has the potential to contain policy on social value.

Catch up on the recordings and slides from previous webinars:

Webinar	Date	Delivered by	Booking link or recording
The Procurement Act 2023: Planning for the main impacts	18 March	CIPFA	<a href="#">Access the recording</a> <a href="#">Download the Slides</a>
Procurement Pipelines and Contract Management Requirements in the new Procurement Act 2023	30 April	Browne Jacobson LLP	<a href="#">Access the recording</a> <a href="#">Download the slides</a>
The new Notices regime in the Procurement Act 2023 – obligations, risks and opportunities for Authorities	14 May	Mills & Reeve	<a href="#">Access the recording</a> <a href="#">Download the slides</a>
Procurement Act 2023: Spotlight on the selection stage	27 June	Eversheds Sutherland	<a href="#">Access the recording</a> <a href="#">Download the slides</a>
Balancing direct award and transparency under the Procurement Act	11 July	Veale Wasbrough Vizards	<a href="#">Access the recording</a> <a href="#">Download the slides</a>



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## Systems

Cabinet Office (CO) are progressing with the development and testing of the Central Digital Platform. HEPA confirm several HE members have volunteered to test the BETA phase that focuses on the registration journey. UKUPC has a representative from the systems group (Andy Hughes, NEUPC) also testing this phase. Updates and feedback will be sought by the end of Dec, with an update from the CO team expected in January. It is anticipated that news of a phased registration will follow testing with every contracting authority and in turn, suppliers needing to register to obtain their own unique registration number.

Some HE portal providers such as Merzell (formerly EU Supply ) and Delta are already making beta versions available shaping some of the Procurement Act 2023 (PA23) procedures, for customers to test and feedback on. Providers have advised that they are confident their solutions will be PA23 ready.

The accelerated pace is allowing providers to distribute new process templates to their customers in advance for testing and trouble shooting. This progress is also allowing them to work on training materials and resources, which will be key to the successful adoption of the new procedures.

## Suppliers

### **The Procurement Act 2023: a short guide for suppliers**

Government Commercial Function has recently issued a [Short Guide to the Procurement Act 23 for Suppliers](#). This guidance document explains the ambitions of the Procurement Act and how it provides more flexibility, greater transparency and greater oversight when working with the public sector. It also gives suppliers an overview of the Central Digital Platform and what they need to do to prepare. It is important to note that as well as a dedicated update service for suppliers, GCF is also signposting suppliers to the same guidance documents they have provided to the public sector.

### **UKUPC Documents for Suppliers**

UKUPC has produced the first in a series of documents for suppliers which the consortia will be issuing to framework suppliers and is available for members to use. [The Suppliers' Introduction to Tendering under PA23](#) will cover background information to the Act and key changes suppliers need to be aware of as well as what they need to do to prepare.