



**JERSEY**  
Chamber of Commerce

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Dear Deputy Inna Gardiner,

Please find below a subset of feedback the Chamber Digital Committee has received and is putting forward in response to the PAC's Procurement Review. Some of these responses have been provided verbatim, others from wider discussions held on this matter over the last couple of years. Some of the questions posed in your request were not answered, so they have been left out.

- **What currently works well with Government Procurement for local businesses and suppliers?**
  - It is sad to say that through all of the discussions we had with the individuals we approached, there was no positive feedback on what currently works well. This is a sad indictment on a part of our government that has so much to offer our local businesses and in turn provide significant benefit to our government. The general consensus is that Government of Jersey Procurement is broken, serving to act as a barrier to business being done, rather than something that enables local businesses to provide valuable goods and services to our government and ultimately local taxpayers.
- **What are your concerns, if any, regarding the current procurement processes?**
  - For local suppliers this process is too time consuming and does not lend itself to local market. Local suppliers (apart from the bigger consultancies) make up the majority of contractors to Government (or should do). These suppliers will typically have limited resources internally to respond to tenders that are likely to be unsuccessful, or cumbersome and unwieldy, ultimately raising the risk of causing profitability issues.
  - There are many, many examples of local businesses who simply will not engage with the Government in competitive tenders that involve procurement – and these include businesses that sell products and services to governments worldwide – there is a level of frustration that they cannot sell into our local community in an honourable way.
  - The current procurement framework and approach appears to be risk mitigation at any cost (including the cost of success), with an approach that only serves the 'big four' and other large entities.
  - As a local tax payer, I'm highly disappointed in the Gov of Jersey procurement process and approach. It does not serve the people or deliver any form of value for money in its current iteration. The optics are beyond awful.
  - The sign-up and onboarding is tedious and lengthy
  - It's not uncommon to spend many days compiling tender information, only to hear nothing back, except when you actively seek feedback. The tendering process appears increasingly risk-averse, favouring suppliers with prior experience with a given department. This makes sense from a risk management perspective, as familiarity with a department means less learning and can highlight potential issues or gaps in requirements. However, it creates a catch-22: you need departmental experience to win tenders, but without winning tenders, you can't gain that experience.

- Winning tenders is very challenging, frustrating, and implementation is often just as difficult. The investment and effort expended to win the tender rarely delivers any return on investment, leading to disillusionment and ultimately directing effort to the private sector where both purchaser and supplier are generally happy with the relationship and delivery of mutual benefit.
  - **Have there been any barriers to engaging with the procurement process you are able to highlight?**
  - The current process does not always obtain the best outcomes since it is driven by documented requirements and not through discussion.
  - The process itself is too inflexible, and does not achieve its goals in awarding contracts to local suppliers or getting value for money.
  - A more flexible, open and interactive process is needed, that would enable talent to be grown and nurtured locally.
  - A high-level perspective is that of a process trying to mitigate risk through documentation rather than take a collaborative approach designed around the skills of exceptional local talent.
  - The process is great for big corporations, but with most businesses in Jersey classified as SMEs, it dismisses the local users who may have limited resources.
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- Who enforces this structured process and is there flexibility to meet the demands and advocate local suppliers?
  - I get a sense of reluctance to change and stick with approved providers.
  - **Are there any initiatives you would recommend to government aimed at enhancing supplier and local business participation in procurement?**
  - For Government bids of a lower value (sub £100k for example), I suspect, don't make the procurement portal...so how do businesses earn the right to know and bid for future projects?
  - Through Chamber, how can we get businesses showcased to Government departments?
  - Network events like 'meet the supplier'?
  - Do we create a joint statement and marketing piece that promotes 'every pound spent in Jersey equates to greater value for all, vs UK or EU purchasing'? The value of our government spending money locally cannot be over-stated. Money made by local businesses with local employees and local shareholders will find its way back into the local economy.
  - **How do you feel the government is ensuring that procurement processes are transparent and fair for all local businesses?**
  - I'm not sure that it is. Clearly we have a Public Finances Manual that makes sense on paper, but there are many examples of the process being subverted or ignored when it suits a prospective purchaser of services within the government.

Sent on behalf of the Jersey Chamber of Commerce Digital Committee.



Yours sincerely,

**MURRAY NORTON**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**