

# Probation and After-Care Service

1 Lemprière Street, St. Helier, Jersey JE2 3XB



Deputy Inna Gardiner  
Chair Public Accounts Committee

## BY EMAIL

02 August 2024

Dear Deputy Gardiner

### Procurement Review

Thank you for your letter of 11 July giving me the opportunity to comment about how the Probation Service manages procurement. After discussion with officers, and for ease of reference, I have attached our responses within the following template:

Question	Guidance								
1. How often does your department utilise the central procurement system for acquiring goods and services?	From January 2023 to June 2024 the Probation Service issued 440 purchase orders at an average of 24 a month.								
2. At what levels in terms of monetary value (e.g., small, medium, large purchases) do you most regularly engage with the central procurement system most frequently?	<table><tr><td>Under £1k</td><td>358 Purchase Orders</td></tr><tr><td>£1k- £25k</td><td>79</td></tr><tr><td>£25k - £100k</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>£100k+</td><td>0</td></tr></table>	Under £1k	358 Purchase Orders	£1k- £25k	79	£25k - £100k	3	£100k+	0
Under £1k	358 Purchase Orders								
£1k- £25k	79								
£25k - £100k	3								
£100k+	0								
3. What aspects of the central procurement system (SAP Ariba) work well and what challenges or issues does your department face when using the central procurement system?	<p>Works well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- centralised system.</li><li>- relatively easy to set up new suppliers due to standard operating procedures.</li></ul> <p>Issues/challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- incomplete range of goods/services and/or suppliers although it's not Amazon and probably unrealistic to expect everything to be in the catalogues!</li><li>- suppliers not being paid in a timely manner</li><li>- not easy to get quick confirmation about whether a supplier has been paid- we have to check Connect Finance for these details.</li><li>- infrequent users can struggle with the system.</li></ul>								
4. How would you describe your department's relationship with suppliers when using the central procurement system (SAP Ariba) and	Some suppliers have difficulty using the system, particularly those not using it on a regular basis and delayed payments can lead to significant supplier dissatisfaction.								

## Probation and After-Care Service

1 Lemprière Street, St. Helier, Jersey JE2 3XB



<p>what feedback have you received from suppliers about their experiences with the central procurement system?</p>	
<p>5. Can you provide details on the number of engagements that have been extended above their original value over the past 5 years? to be issued to each department for inclusion.</p>	<p>The Service renewed a one-year contract for the supply of its case management system in May 2024 to the value of £76k.</p> <p>There was also an extension to the contract with G4S in December 2023 for the provision of staff to supervise the community service scheme. An hourly rate of £24 was agreed.</p>
<p>6. How do you evaluate the delivery and closure of individual procurements within your department?</p>	<p>We would have regard to the standards in the Public Finance Manual (PFM) of propriety, value for money and feasibility.</p> <p>We would refer to the Manual for guidance and have invited Head of Financial Governance to present to our management team and Probation Board which was well received.</p> <p>Our bi weekly operational management meeting has a standing 'Finance' standing agenda item where we are able to review successful/unsuccessful procurements where necessary.</p> <p>As a small department we can learn from processes quite quickly. As an example, we have been able to advise suppliers about the Ariba processes where they have encountered difficulty with the system. We also tend to liaise with Accounts Payable where there are problems.</p>
<p>7. Does the current level of autonomy provided work well for your procurement needs?</p>	<p>Yes. We think we are well supported.</p>
<p>8. Do you have any additional suggestions or recommendations in order to further enhance procurement processes?</p>	<p>Has a supplier forum been considered to provide views?</p>
<p>9. How does the Probation Service currently ensure that procurement processes align with government regulations and policies, and do you have any processes that sit separately to government regulations and policies?</p>	<p>We are subject to the same requirements and processes as GOJ departments under the PFM.</p>

## Probation and After-Care Service

1 Lemprière Street, St. Helier, Jersey JE2 3XB



<p>10. What strategies are in place to enhance the transparency of your own procurement processes for suppliers and stakeholders?</p>	<p>We use the PFM.</p>
<p>11. How do you assess the effectiveness of your own procurement processes, and what key performance indicators do you use?</p>	<p>We don't have our own procurement processes. We would monitor timeliness of processes and feedback from suppliers.</p>
<p>12. What feedback mechanisms do you have in place to gather input from suppliers about your procurement processes, and how do you act on this feedback?</p>	<p>As a small department, we haven't felt the need to establish a formal feedback process. Instead, suppliers contact our Executive Support Manager or case management team where there might be difficulties. We can escalate these as appropriate, but our experience is this type of collaboration with the supplier is successful at resolving problems.</p>
<p>13. How do you ensure that your procurement requirements are clear and well communicated to all potential suppliers?</p>	<p>In accordance with the PFM, tenders above a certain value are advertised publicly on CI Tenders and are available to all suppliers new/existing. We have recently begun a project to replace a case management system and we worked with Commercial Services to ensure we were following an agreed and fair process.</p>
<p>14. What measures do you have in place to ensure the sustainability and social responsibility of your procurement decisions?</p>	<p>These are questions that we included in our Invitation to Tender documentation for our new case management project. The answers were taken into account when choosing a preferred supplier. Procurement decisions for smaller amounts take into consideration factors such as the impact of the spending on rehabilitation, public protection and safeguarding.</p>
<p>15. How do you handle disputes or grievances from suppliers regarding procurement decisions from your own processes, and what is your process for resolution?</p>	<p>We have not experienced disputes although we have resolved disgruntled suppliers in the early days of Ariba over unpaid invoices. We would refer to Commercial Services for advice if we were not able to resolve directly with the supplier.</p>
<p>16. What are the barriers to engagement that suppliers face in your procurement processes, and how can you work to eliminate these barriers?</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>17. How do you ensure that procurement opportunities are widely communicated and accessible to all potential suppliers?</p>	<p>We refer to the PFM and work with the Commercial Services team.</p>

## Probation and After-Care Service

1 Lemprière Street, St. Helier, Jersey JE2 3XB



I hope this assists, but I would be very pleased to answer any subsequent enquiries should that be necessary.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M Cutland', written in a cursive style.

**Mike Cutland**  
**Chief Probation Officer**