

Economy and Fair Work Committee
Wednesday 17 April 2024
12th Meeting, 2024 (Session 6)

Post-legislative scrutiny of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 Note by the Clerk

Background

1. Under the [Procurement Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) (“the Act”), public bodies are required to consider how their procurement activities can be used to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their area and how they will facilitate the involvement of SMEs, third sector and supported businesses, and support innovation. The Act places some administrative requirements on higher spending public bodies to publish procurement strategies and annual procurement reports.
2. The legacy report of the previous session committee noted work in this area had started but was curtailed due to the pandemic. It drew attention to a summary of evidence it had gathered which could be used as a foundation for future work.
3. This Committee noted that procurement issues had come up in its work and agreed it would be useful to undertake post-legislative scrutiny of the Act. At its meeting on 21 June 2023, a thematic approach was agreed and call for views was issued. At the meeting on 13 December, the Committee considered responses to the nine questions asked in the call for views and noted key emerging themes. The Committee then agreed the structure, themes, and witnesses for the oral evidence sessions.

Inquiry Structure

4. The call for written views ran from 29 June to 3 October 2023. Written responses [can be accessed online](#). The inquiry is being held over five sessions. Session 1 - the experience of businesses with procurement in Scotland. Session 2 – the third sector and social enterprise experience, Session 3 – contracting authorities, Session 4 – support for business and contracting authorities and Session 5 – Scottish Government.
5. The Committee also held an informal online engagement event on 27 March to hear directly from a local authority and some of its suppliers and local businesses looking to become suppliers for a local snapshot.

Today’s Witnesses

6. This is the fifth and final evidence session of this inquiry. The Committee will hear from—
 - Tom Arthur, Minister for Community Wealth and Public Finance;
 - Nikki Archer, Head of Procurement and Commercial Policy; and
 - Graeme Cook, Head of Scottish Government Procurement Services, Scottish Government.
7. Following this final evidence session, the Committee will consider the evidence received throughout the inquiry and agree a report of its findings.

**Clerks to the Committee
April 2024**