

Ready for Reform briefing series

Procurement Bill - Are they still playing ping-pong?

26 September 2023

The aim of this briefing is to provide you with an update on the progress of the [Procurement Bill](#) and how it is progressing through the final stages of the Parliamentary process.

On the 11 September 2023 the House of Lords considered the House of Commons' amendments to the Bill. This stage is often referred to as the "ping-pong" stage where amendments go back and forth between the two houses until an agreement has been reached. So, the question every procurement professional is now asking is are they still playing legislation ping-pong? The short answer is yes, but the issues on the table have significantly narrowed and the game may soon be over!

Some significant issues were debated, and motions put forward by the Lords, which had the potential to de-rail the implementation of the Bill and set the process back many months. In particular, there was fierce criticism by some members of the treatment of the NHS in the Procurement Bill who were seeking to re-include the NHS in the definition of the contracting authority and the scope of the Act. Ultimately, the amendment to the motion was not agreed.

In light of the human rights abuses against the Uyghur people in China, the House of Lords debated the inclusion of additional exclusion grounds to reject suppliers whose supply chains are involved in organ harvesting. The Lords agreed this amendment; however, the Commons subsequently disagreed with this amendment (14 September). This was on the basis that it is unnecessary to have a specific discretionary exclusion ground for involvement in forced organ harvesting as this is already covered by the general professional misconduct exclusion ground.

No further dates have been announced to discuss further amendments, we will report on these as they are scheduled.

[Procurement Bill progress and updates](#) →

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