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The Whitehall & Industry Group
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'Economic Growth & Prosperity' Series The Outsourcing Playbook V2.0

Expert Insight

We were joined by Meryl Bushell, Crown Representative at the Cabinet Office, and Matthew Browne, Deputy Director of the Outsourcing Programme at the Cabinet Office, to discuss the launch of the second version of the Outsourcing Playbook. Our speakers touched on many interesting points, including:



- The original Outsourcing Playbook published in February 2019 provided new central government guidance on outsourcing. It identified four key opportunities for improvement: (1) setting projects up for success from the start, (2) improving resilience in markets and suppliers, (3) reforming capabilities, and (4) having resolution plans ready. 11 key policies were launched to provide a basis for successful outsourcing in the future.
- The Outsourcing Playbook is a living document, and thus the second version of the Playbook was launched to build upon the 11 original policies. This included: additional guidance on the challenges of insourcing and reframing of the 'Make or Buy' policy as Delivery Model assessments, increased focus on wider government commercial policy priorities including driving innovation and social value, a new chapter on building and maintaining successful relationships, and guidance notes to provide deeper and richer information in support of the original 11 key policies.
- The Cabinet Office is continuing consistent implementation of the Outsourcing Playbook's policies across government using a 3-pronged approach. This involves delivering a suite of training across government departments covering all the policies set out in the Playbook, providing commercial experts for specific project support across government, and ensuring that compliance processes within the Cabinet Office also reflect the policies set out in the Playbook.
- Going forward, the Cabinet Office is looking to build upon the success of the Outsourcing Playbook by moving towards a 'sourcing playbook', which would apply beyond the typical outsourcing sector and possibly to the wider public sector, including local authorities and the NHS.

Our members' questions

Our members posed some challenging questions to be answered. The issues raised included:

- Lessons learnt about outsourcing during the COVID-19 pandemic
- The culture change required to move from procuring at the cheapest rate to ensuring the greatest value for all parties
- Supporting the levelling up agenda, and the link to the requirement of social value
- Ensuring correct contracts are used and addressing issues that arise due to not drafting specifications precisely enough
- Engagement with the private sector for development and implementation of the Playbook
- Mandatory compliance with the Playbook
- Considerations for supporting public managers running sourcing analysis

WIG members can listen to the presentation [here](#)
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