



DATASHEET PUBLIC SECTOR

From tail-spend risk to audit-ready control

Across the UK public sector, procurement teams are under pressure to demonstrate value for money, evidence social value and stand up every purchase to audit, all under the Procurement Act 2023 and tightening budgets. Unite brings indirect and tail spend into one compliant, managed platform that helps public bodies buy competitively and transparently, evidence compliance by design, and reduce the total cost of purchasing.



The public-sector procurement challenge

Public bodies depend on indirect and tail spend, PPE, office and facilities supplies, small electricals, MRO, lab and specialist consumables, to keep services running. Yet these purchases are often fragmented across teams, bought off-contract, and impossible to evidence at audit.



Bring indirect and tail spend into one compliant, governed route to market.



Evidence social value, SME participation and sustainability by design, not by report.



Reduce maverick, off-contract buying that cannot be defended at audit.



Call off all indirect spend via an existing approved framework.

Why this matters

UK public procurement is entering its most scrutinised period in a generation.

The Procurement Act 2023, in force since 24 February 2025, replaces the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and shifts contract awards to the Most Advantageous Tender:

best overall value, including social value and sustainability, not lowest price alone. The National Procurement Policy Statement, HM Treasury's Managing Public Money and GCA value-for-money guidance all raise the audit bar on every decision.

Yet most public bodies cannot yet meet that bar. Tail spend can represent up to 20% of total spend but as much as 80% of transactional effort, and it is where public value quietly leaks. Left unmanaged it produces cost leakage, compliance risk and administrative burden.

SME and social-value obligations turn participation into a pass/fail condition: government targets one pound in every three with SMEs, and the National Procurement Policy Statement cares about direct SME delivery most of all.



Central digital platform

A single online hub for publishing procurement notices and related documentation.



Enhanced transparency rules

Improved access to procurement information to encourage openness and clear oversight.



Supplier restrictions & removal

Revised criteria for disqualifying suppliers and maintaining exclusion records.



SME assistance

Better access and simplified processes for small and medium-sized enterprises.

The Procurement Act 2023 / Core updates



What are the problems facing public-sector procurement?

Poor spend visibility

Public-sector procurement is frequently held back by poor spend visibility, off-framework buying, audit exposure and mounting compliance obligations.

Urgent or low-value purchases often bypass approved routes, creating 'maverick spend' that cannot be justified when scrutiny arrives.

Off-contract buying

Off-contract buying leaves purchases with no audit trail when a regulator asks.

Not audit ready social value targets

SME and social-value targets are mandated but rarely audit-ready without a governed platform.

Tail-spend leakage

Tail-spend leakage erodes value for money and invites Public Accounts Committee scrutiny.

Reporting obligations

Reporting obligations add pressure to standardise and evidence procurement.



Unite addresses these pressures with one governed platform, a vetted supplier network, and audit evidence built into the buying flow.

Public Sector Performance with Unite

On Government Commercial Agency (GCA) framework RM6202 (Tail Spend Solution), a closed framework that permits direct award, no new tender.

43,000

users at the Home Office on the Unite Procurement Portal, via RM6202.

35–38%

reduction in procurement cycle time and transaction-processing overhead.

63%

reduction in tail suppliers, simplifying supplier management and consolidation.

12.2%

verified price advantage on a like-for-like basket, £359,054 saved on £2.94m of comparable spend vs leading consumer marketplace.

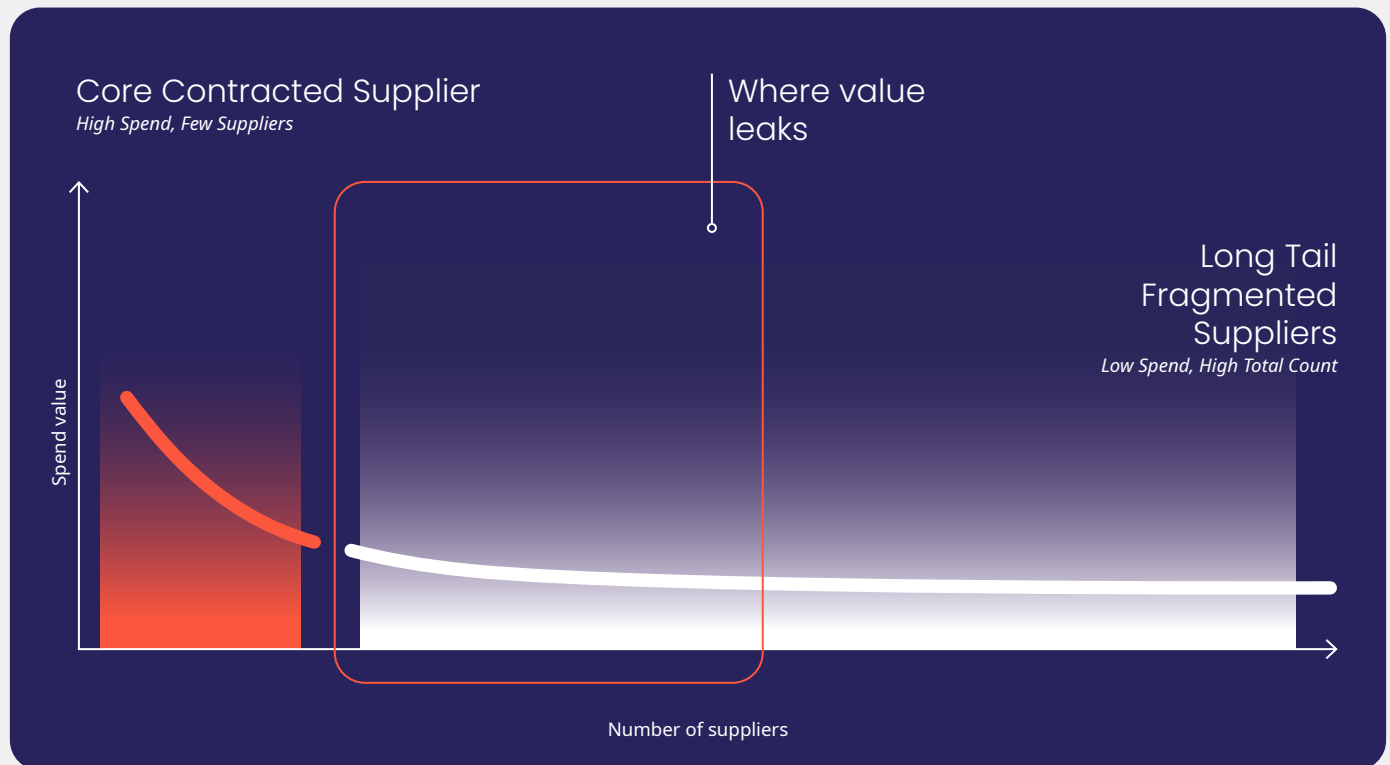
£42.9m

to SMEs, verified SME revenue delivered RM6202 in 2025. 68% SME participation across 2025, 200 active SME suppliers engaged. Genuine partnerships, not layered subcontracting.



What problems does Unite solve?

Tail spend sits outside core sourcing yet absorbs disproportionate effort from procurement, finance and operations, and in a regulated setting, it is where audit risk concentrates. For public bodies, that can mean indefensible purchases, weak SME evidence and hidden process costs.



Tail spend



About the framework: RM6202

RM6202, the Tail Spend Solution, was launched in January 2022 as the first framework of its kind: a route for ad hoc, low-volume, low-value goods not covered by other contracts. It is a closed framework that permits direct award, with call-off contracts of up to four years, and is available to organisations across the UK public and third sectors.

In December 2024, its scope expanded to incorporate the former Buildings Materials & Equipment framework (RM6157). Framework management now sits with the Government Commercial Authority (GCA). For a buyer, the practical point is simple: working with Unite through RM6202 is a direct call-off, not a new procurement.



How Unite helps

- + **Makes every order defensible through an auto-generated purchasing protocol:** a minimum of three competitive offers recorded per order, downloadable as a time-stamped PDF, audit-ready by design.
- + **Brings tail-spend behaviour under policy through in-flow controls:** a basket value cap and a purchase compliance threshold requiring justification when buying outside framework.
- + **Simplifies audit and payables through a Single Creditor model:** one contract, one invoice, one delivery-tracking code, every purchase order traceable to a vetted supplier.
- + **Evidences social value with a supplier network** in which 82% of the active supplier base are SMEs, and sustainability with line-item CO2 data per order.



What Unite does

Unite is a procurement platform that brings indirect and tail spend into one controlled environment. A fully managed platform, Unite combines a single-creditor marketplace with governed catalogue intelligence to make

public-sector buying more compliant, defensible and measurable. It is a neutral, non-trading marketplace: no own stock, no supplier commissions, with full transaction traceability and EU data sovereignty on every transaction.



Price

Competitive cost on comparable goods



Social value

SME participation and regional economic benefit



Efficiency

Total acquisition cost, not just purchase price



Compliance

Audit-readiness and statutory alignment

Methodology / The four dimensions of value

What the UK public sector can do with Unite

Home Office



Home Office

- + Call off RM6202 directly, no new procurement, no full-and-open tender, with onboarding and configuration against your compliance obligations.
- + Configure purchasing rules and approval workflows to match Contract Procedure Rules and framework obligations.
- + Integrate with existing e-procurement systems, or use straightforward web-based access, with no 'rip-and-replace'.
- + Use structured reporting and better spend data to evidence value for money, SME participation and social value.

The Home Office runs indirect procurement through Unite on Government Commercial Agency (GCA) framework RM6202, with around 43,000 users on the Unite Procurement Portal.

One creditor. Audit-ready by design. A single framework call-off, no new procurement.



Benefits and outcomes



For public bodies, Unite reduces the true cost of buying by lowering process complexity, improving price visibility and removing maverick spend. Verified results show a 35 to 38% reduction in procurement cycle time and transaction processing overhead, and a 63% reduction in tail suppliers, with SME and sustainability evidence generated as you

buy, not reconstructed when an auditor asks. The trust signal behind it: Unite is a neutral platform that takes no supplier commissions and assumes default risk for all purchases, with externally audited assurance including the Fair Tax Mark, Living Wage Employer status, EcoVadis Gold and Armed Forces Covenant Silver.

See your potential savings

Discover how Unite helps public bodies bring tail spend under control, evidence compliance and social value, and demonstrate value for money through one governed, framework-backed platform. Use the Unite Process Cost Calculator to see where your organisation may be losing time and money, and where savings could be unlocked.

[Try the Unite Process Cost Calculator](#)

