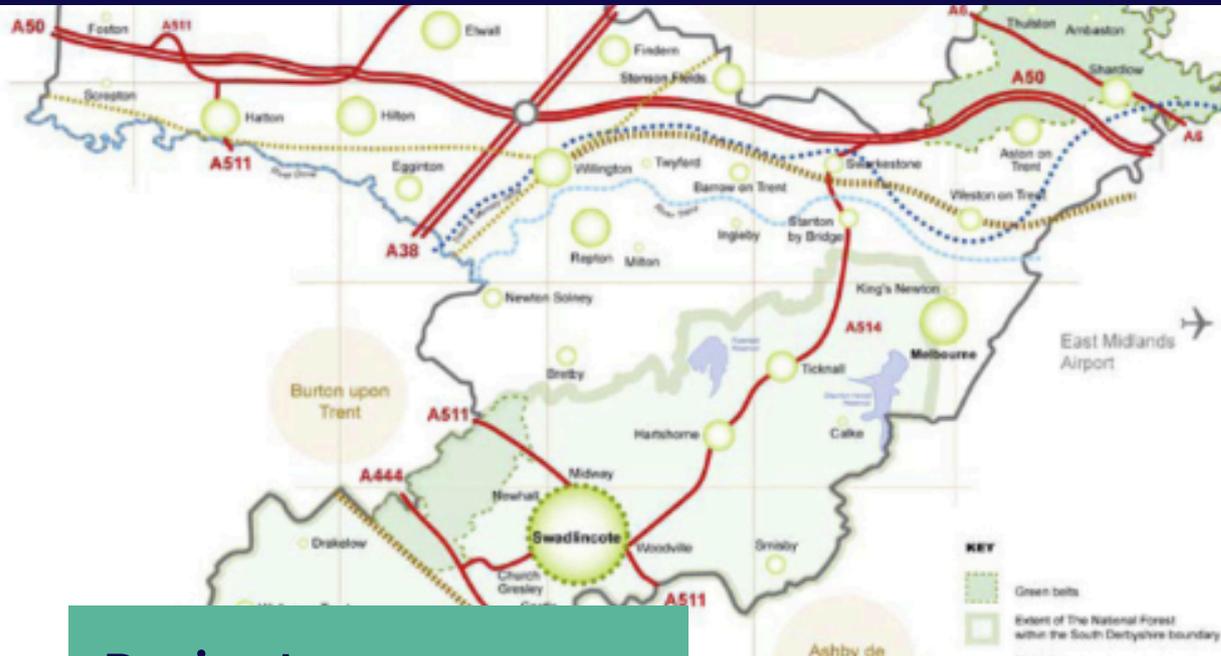


## Tender Evaluation Training



### Project Overview

In 2025, South Derbyshire District Council (SDDC) identified a need to train their staff in the new Procurement Act 2023 and the impact it would have for their roles.

V4 Services wrote and delivered this training and, following its success and positive feedback, were invited to expand the training offering to cover the tender evaluation process and contract management.

### The Commission

Previously, most procurement activity at SDDC had been carried out by an external service, and many staff had no previous experience in writing tenders or carrying out evaluations.

The training sessions were designed by V4, as part of a knowledge transfer activity (building capacity and capability), ensuring that all evaluators could work in line with the new Regulations, follow best practice and robustly defend their scores through moderation.

The sessions needed to cover why formal tender evaluations are important, where the risks lie, and how to score according to a set matrix and provide suitable comments for supplier feedback.

# The Challenge

V4 were commissioned by SDDC to create a fit-for-purpose training module - suitable for all staff, ensuring minimal disruption to service delivery.

Most staff had little or no exposure to procurement activities as this has previously been delivered by an external agency or via direct awards to frameworks

*With the Procurement Act 2023 (PA23) having gone live, the very small in-house procurement team were already immersed in revising template documents and ensuring SDDC were PA23 compliant.*

## V4 Approach

- A comprehensive guide to tender evaluations was developed.
- The training provided an overview of key evaluation components:
  - scoring matrices
  - importance of recording - maintaining a transparent audit trail of notes and scores
  - moderation
  - feedback
  - reducing risk of challenge
  - differences between legal challenges and routes for raising concerns
- The intention was to build confidence in carrying out evaluations and know what to expect in moderation sessions - focusing on substance over style.

## Outcomes and Key Successes

The training has since been used with several cohorts of staff at South Derbyshire District Council and has been amended and adapted for use with other authorities. We have tested it to train members of the public/service users who will be involved with evaluating tenders and have received a very positive response.

The Procurement Lead at SDDC described the slide deck as, *“absolutely brilliant!”* and stated, *“...on the whole I am very pleased with this, thank you”*.

Feedback from attendees has been extremely favourable, with one delegate saying, *“That was fantastic, I so wish I had that training before I did my first evaluation. Thank you”*.

- The training session was recorded and has since been viewed by several other officers, either for the first time or as a ‘refresher’ for staff who carry out evaluations infrequently.
- When writing specification and quality questions, staff who have completed this training are more mindful of how each question will be evaluated and what ‘need-to-have’ elements are included in the specification.
- Moderation sessions are now quicker/more efficient as trained staff are prepared to justify their scores and have robust comments to back them up.
- Challenges/complaints are rare, but if this occurs we have the necessary comments and feedback to alleviate any supplier concerns