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Planning

Drone Technology for Environmental Monitoring and Disaster Response

Somerset Council

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-063017

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-05a9e6

Published 7 October 2025, 4:28pm

Scope

Description

Somerset Council is inviting suppliers to participate in a pre-market engagement exercise to explore innovative drone-based-and potentially other-technological solutions that can enhance environmental monitoring and disaster response across the region.

This engagement will inform the procurement. The Council anticipates a multi-stage procurement approach, beginning with a pilot delivered by selected supplier(s), followed by further testing and potential scaling of the solution(s) that demonstrate cost-effective impact and alignment with the challenge requirements.

Total value (estimated)

- £498,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 16 February 2026 to 15 February 2028
- Possible extension to 15 February 2030
- 4 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 35613000 - Unmanned aerial vehicles
- 60400000 - Air transport services
- 71351500 - Ground investigation services
- 71351720 - Geophysical surveys of archaeological sites
- 71510000 - Site-investigation services
- 79961200 - Aerial photography services

Contract locations

- UKK23 - Somerset

Engagement

Engagement deadline

7 November 2025

Engagement process description

Purpose of Engagement

Somerset Council is inviting suppliers to participate in a pre-market engagement exercise to explore innovative drone-based and potentially other technological solutions that can enhance environmental monitoring and disaster response across the region.

This engagement will inform the procurement. The Council anticipates a multi-stage procurement approach, beginning with a pilot delivered by selected supplier(s), followed by further testing and potential scaling of the solution(s) that demonstrate cost-effective impact and alignment with the challenge requirements.

Challenge Statement

"Somerset Council is seeking innovative solutions that harness drone technology to enhance environmental monitoring, asset management, and disaster response across the county.

While drones offer powerful capabilities for collecting high-resolution, real-time data in remote and sensitive locations, their full potential is currently limited by a range of technical, operational, analytical, and ethical challenges.

We invite proposals that address these barriers and unlock the transformative potential of drones or other methods to support climate resilience, ecological stewardship, and evidence-based decision-making. Solutions should be scalable, adaptable to diverse environments, and capable of integrating with existing data systems to deliver actionable insights."

Background

As part of our commitment to sustainable land management and climate resilience, Somerset Council is investigating the use of drone technology to:

- Monitor coastal erosion and river dynamics
- Map habitats and assess biodiversity
- Detect pollution in terrestrial and aquatic environments

- Support rapid response to environmental hazards (e.g. flooding, landslides)

Focus areas include River Parrett, Minehead Harbour, Watchet Harbour, and Doniford Beach.

Challenges to Address

We are particularly interested in solutions that overcome:

- Technical barriers: battery life, payload limits, weather sensitivity, data processing
- Operational constraints: flight regulations, pilot skills, maintenance
- Data & privacy concerns: secure data handling, ethical surveillance
- Environmental impact: wildlife disturbance, e-waste
- Analytical complexity: data interpretation and integration with other source

Desired Outcomes

- Scalable, cost-effective surveying in remote areas
- Adaptability to varied environmental contexts
- Integrated data management and analysis
- Enhanced disaster preparedness and response
- Use of AI for predictive modelling and planning

Evaluation Criteria

Responses will be assessed based on:

- Technical feasibility and innovation
- Cost-effectiveness and sustainability
- Scalability and integration potential
- Environmental impact

Engagement deadline

16:00 on 07 November 2025

How to Participate

Interested suppliers are invited to:

- To register your interest, please email corinne.matthews@somerset.gov.uk including your organisation's name and main contact details.
- Upon receipt of your expression of interest, the team will provide you with a pre-market engagement questionnaire for completion.
- All completed questionnaires must be submitted to corinne.matthews@somerset.gov.uk by 16:00 on Friday 7th November 2025.
- Responses will help shape future requirements and inform potential market solutions.

****Please note that this market engagement exercise is for information-gathering purposes and does not constitute a commitment to initiate a procurement process or award any contract.****

Participation

Particular suitability

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

21 November 2025

Contracting authority

Somerset Council

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PPGC-1434-MQPJ

County Hall, The Crescent

Taunton

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United Kingdom

Telephone: 0300 123 2224

Email: commercialandprocurement@somerset.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk>

Region: UKK23 - Somerset

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government