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Planning

Spinnaker Tower Operator

Portsmouth City Council

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

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Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-05e0a1

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Scope

Description

Portsmouth City Council - the 'Council' - with support from its appointed leasing consultants Colliers - is seeking to engage with visitor attraction / leisure operators to explore options for the future operation of the Spinnaker Tower.

The Council is seeking to engage with appropriately qualified & experienced operators directly in 1-1 on-line TEAMS meetings. The meetings will take place between 24th - 28th November and 10 slots are available which will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Further details in respect of dates, timings and booking process can be found within the "Spinnaker Tower - Occupier PME Brief" located within the document set on InTend. The link to the site can be found here - <https://in-tendhost.co.uk/portsmouthcc.aspx/home>

The feedback gained from operators will be used to inform the strategy for the subsequent competitive bidding process which will be deployed to secure an operator. It is envisaged that the bidding process will commence in early 2026 to allow for award in early Summer 2026 ahead of commencement of the new arrangements which are envisaged to start on 7th October 2026.

The Council anticipates partnering with an established operator who will invest in and reinvigorate the Tower, and the surrounding land to create an exciting new leisure

destination.

Whilst the Council's current preferred position would be let to the new arrangements on an operating lease basis the Council is keen to investigate a spectrum of operational, commercial and legal options, some of which may fall under the scope of the Procurement Act 23.

Please note, in line with the Procurement Act 23 the Council have provided a term duration within this notice. The Council is seeking to discuss term duration with interested parties in the preliminary market engagement.

To ensure that the engagement process would not lead to complications if a bidding process is undertaken which needs to comply with the Procurement Act 23, and in general interests of transparency and fair and equal treatment, the Council has instigated this Preliminary Market Engagement (PME) process via issue of a PME Notice on the Central Government Find a Tender Service / Central Digital Platform.

This allows for all suitably qualified and experienced operators to engage with this process should they wish, rather than just those known to the Council and its consultant agent.

In undertaking this PME exercise the Council is seeking to gain insight from operators in respect of:

- Market experience, capacity & interest
- Options for development of the visitor offer, site uses & continuing position as a key landmark of the wider Solent region
- Options for operating models, roles & responsibilities, legal structures & partnership working
- Commercial options, investment, funding, return & risk
- Competitive bidding options, process & programme

The Council's process and timetable for undertaking the PME process is set out below. The Council is not able to provide further details for the formal procurement process at this point but will provide further information as this is developed.

- Issue PME Notice on Find a Tender Service - 13th November 2025
- Publish PME Brief & supporting documents on In-Tend 13th November 2025

- Target deadline for 1-1 meetings expression of interest - ASAP & ideally no later than 21st November 2025 17:00
- 1-1 engagement meetings - 24th-28th November 2025
- Development of market informed next steps recommendations report - December 2025

The Council will administrate the preliminary market engagement process using its e-sourcing system In-Tend which will be used for:

- Access to and issue of information and documentation
- Clarification requests and response
- Expression of interest submission
- Allocation of 1-1 meeting slots
- Issue of Preliminary Market Engagement High Level Summary and Operator Specific summaries for review and agreement

Contract dates (estimated)

- 7 October 2026 to 6 October 2046
- 20 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 63500000 - Travel agency, tour operator and tourist assistance services
- 70330000 - Property management services of real estate on a fee or contract basis

- 79952000 - Event services
- 92000000 - Recreational, cultural and sporting services

Contract locations

- UKJ31 - Portsmouth

Engagement

Engagement deadline

21 November 2025

Engagement process description

PME Documentation

The following documents are available via the Council's e-sourcing solution In-Tend:

- Spinnaker Tower Operator PME Brief (this document)
- Spinnaker Tower, Portsmouth - Teaser Brochure - November 2025
- For 1:1 meetings -

- o Expression of Interest Form

- o Conflict Assessment Form

PME Key Agenda Points

The Council is keen to discuss and seek views from occupiers on the following broad points through the 1-1 meetings. The list of items is non-exhaustive and will be developed within the 1-1 meetings through open collaborative dialogue.

The Council is also likely to adapt the discussion points following review of operational experience & business activity information included within submitted EOIs to ensure that the points raised are relevant and make the best use of time for all parties.

Occupiers are encouraged to put forward their own items for discussion at the meeting, ideally providing this in advance either in their expression of interest form or subsequently via In-tend correspondence in advance of the 1-1 meeting.

- Relevant experience, capacity & interest
- Options for development of the visitor offer, site uses & continuing position as a key landmark of the wider Solent region
- Promotion & marketing
- Options for operating models, roles & responsibilities, legal structures & partnership working
- Commercial options, investment, funding, return & risk
- Competitive bidding options, process & programme

1-1 Slots, Booking Requirements & Briefing Pack

The Council is inviting suitably qualified & experienced operators to take part in exploratory 1-1 on-line Teams meetings which will take place between 24th-28th November 2025. The Council has 10 1-hour slots available. The 1-1 slots available are set out below and will be allocated on a first come first served basis to operators.

- Meeting slot 1 - Monday 24th November 9.30 - 10.30
- Meeting slot 2 - Monday 24th November 11.00 - 12.00
- Meeting slot 3 - Monday 24th November 13.30 - 14.30
- Meeting slot 4 - Monday 24th November 15.00 - 16.00
- Meeting slot 5 - Tuesday 25th November 14.00 - 15.00
- Meeting slot 6 - Wednesday 26th November 9.30 - 10.30
- Meeting slot 7 - Wednesday 26th November 11.00 - 12.00
- Meeting slot 8 - Thursday 27th November 15.00 - 16.00

- Meeting slot 9 - Friday 28th November 9.30 - 10.30
- Meeting slot 10 - Friday 28th November 11.00 - 12.00

Interested occupiers are required to complete the Expression of Interest (EOI) and Conflict of Interest (COI) forms accessible via the council's e-sourcing system In-tend in order to book a 1-1 slot. The link to the e-tendering system can be found here - <https://in-tendhost.co.uk/portsmouthcc/aspx/home>

The Expression of Interest and Conflict Assessment Form documents should be submitted via In-tend by no later than Friday 21st November 17:00. However, as access to 1-1 slots is limited and will be allocated on a first come first served basis interested occupiers are encouraged to submit applications asap in advance of the deadline to help ensure that their 1-1 time slot preferences can be accommodated.

Operators are required to state which meeting slots they are able to attend and state ranked order of preference for the dates and times available within their completed EOI form. Operators will be allocated their preferred slots wherever possible, but priority will be given on a first come first served basis.

If none of the slots which are available can be accommodated by an Operator the Council may be able to make further slots available, however due to time and resource pressures this cannot be guaranteed. In the unlikely event that it is not possible to organise a 1-1 meeting, affected occupiers will be given the opportunity to provide written feedback to ensure that no interested parties are excluded from inputting into this PME exercise.

The Council will confirm which slot has been allocated within a target lead in of 3 working days before 1-1 meeting via In-tend correspondence, dependent upon whether operators submit expressions of interest in advance of the deadline. Following confirmation by both parties the Council will issue a Teams link to the Organisation's attendees / delegates at least 1 working day before the 1-1 meeting.

Occupiers will only be invited to attend a 1-1 meeting and receive the further documentation where:

- 1) no conflicts are declared which cannot be mitigated;
- 2) where the EOI form has been fully completed - including for slot preferences, business & contact information and self-certification of meeting all stated minimum business activity & experience requirements stated within the EOI form and later in this document.

Should Operators have any questions in respect of the participation requirements, process or any other matters these must be addressed to the Council via it's e-sourcing system In-tend using the correspondence function.

Operators should note that there is no obligation to take part in this preliminary market engagement exercise and that if they do not take part, it will not preclude them from any subsequent related competitive bidding processes. Similarly, engaging Operators will not receive preferential treatment in any competitive bidding process.

Expression of Interest

As part of their completed Expression of Interest form operators are to provide case study details of one to three relevant sites.

Operators are encouraged to provide 3 relevant case studies, if possible, but can use just 1 case study as long as this case study meets all of the essential experience & business activity requirements set out below. Conversely providers may include for 2-3 contract case studies which individually do not meet all of the essential requirements but collectively address all of the requirements.

Ideally case study examples put forward should relate to operational sites but planned or in-development sites can also be proposed on the condition that the operator can demonstrate that they have secured future operations.

Similarly, case study examples should ideally also relate to sites that the operator is involved in directly delivering, however operators may also put forward sites that they are not operating on the condition that they can demonstrate that they now employ staff who in their previous employment had a key role in managing operational delivery at the site.

The essential experience / business activity requirements that Operators will need to demonstrate within their expression of interest applications and be booked onto a 1-1 meeting are as follows:

- Operation of a regionally significant visitor / leisure attraction
- Operator day to day site operations, FM & maintenance responsibilities
- Operator customer experience responsibilities
- Operator budget formulation & management responsibilities
- Operator site 'offer' development, marketing & promotion activities
- Operator sales & demand risk

As set out in the EOI form, case study information can be provided via links to relevant web pages or pre-existing material rather than producing necessarily producing bespoke new material for this PME exercise.

Where minimal information is provided and the application is purely on a self-certification basis, the Council may request further information prior to confirming and / or conducting the 1-1 session.

Contracting authority

Portsmouth City Council

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Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government