



WELSH GOVERNMENT: ESOURCING, CONTRACT MANAGEMENT, ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES

Electronic Signatures Integrated in JAGGAER Provide Agility and Business Continuity for Public Procurement in Wales

The Challenge

David Nicholson is Head of Commercial and Procurement – Digital and ICT Branch for the Welsh Government in Cardiff. In 2018 the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government announced a refocus of the National Procurement Service and Value Wales in the form of a written statement, referring to the need for a digital action plan for procurement. With support from Gartner Consulting, this was mapped out in a series

of workshops into three pillars covering demand, governance and supply in March 2019. It was further refined with feedback from the wider Welsh public sector, with a view to ensuring maximum business continuity by getting more value from the existing tools and resources.

“My team inherited a series of legacy tools and outsourced services, just as we faced the two huge challenges: Covid-19 and Brexit. Both made planning exceptionally challenging,” David Nicholson said, “but we are making good progress.”

“We implemented the DocuSign digital signature functionality into eTenderWales before Covid-19 struck, but it soon turned out to be a very opportune decision. Without it, I really don’t know how we could have coped through the pandemic.”

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Procurement – Digital and ICT Branch
Welsh Government

Although for the time being Wales will continue to implement the European Single Procurement Directive, reform of the procurement system is on the horizon and there are other changes afoot, creating some uncertainty in all UK public administrations. Three new chief digital officers are being appointed across the Welsh public sector, responsible for health, local government, and the Welsh government’s agencies and “arm’s-length bodies” such as Natural Resources Wales. They will be setting out their digital strategies. On top of this there are legislative considerations such as the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales)

Act 2015, which sets out duties for public bodies, and, looking forward, several manifesto commitments that link to the digital action plan.

An Important Step on the Digital Journey

The Welsh Government uses JAGGAER for its sourcing and tendering portal, **eTenderWales / eDendro Cymru** and in early 2019, as part of the eProcurement team's efforts to implement the digital action plan within the constraints described above, it explored ways to extend the use of JAGGAER software. Apart from JAGGAER's extensive

Welsh Government

The Welsh Government is the devolved government of Wales, a country with a population of 3,156,000, and is responsible for policy areas such as health, education, economic development, transport and local government. It consists of a Cabinet and deputy ministers, supported by more than 5,000 civil servants. Its budget in 2019-20 was £18.4 billion, 80% of which is provided by an allocation from the UK government and the rest from locally raised taxes.

The Welsh Government's relationship with JAGGAER dates back to around the time of the Government of Wales Act 2006, which made devolved government a reality. Since then, procurement has gone through a couple of reorganisations, but JAGGAER continues to be the software of choice for tendering in many departments in the Welsh Government, local authorities, NHS Wales and various agencies.

experience in the public sector, coupled with the ease of use of the software, one of the advantages is that JAGGAER is multi-lingual, supporting both English and Welsh language.

"We implemented the DocuSign digital signature functionality into eTenderWales before Covid-19 struck, but it soon turned out to be a very opportune decision. Without it, I really don't know how we could have coped through the pandemic. Before we had digital signatures, every contract had to be signed off by a person with the authority to do so, who had to be physically present. Then they had to be scanned and uploaded to the document management system. With lockdowns and office closures, that was a health risk and caused significant delays. It might take weeks for a contract to be signed off. With DocuSign, it takes just minutes and the contract is filed in the document management system automatically," Nicholson said. "And all from the comfort of my home!"

Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 and the need to work remotely in mid-March 2020, several hundred contract documents have been electronically and securely signed using DocuSign. "If this is extended across every procurement team the productivity benefit will be enormous," Nicholson said. He recognises that there is a huge opportunity to get further benefits the digital transformation of procurement in general and the JAGGAER One platform in particular.

"It was relatively easy to push this through for digital and ICT procurement as the suppliers expect it — this is their world. The challenge now is to extend it to other



departments and authorities that are using JAGGAER. As a procurement community, we need to be thinking digitally and if there is anything positive coming out of the pandemic, it is the broader acceptance of digital technologies and acceptance of the need for digital transformation,” said Nicholson.

“This is an important step on the journey as it communicates clear and tangible benefits to all potential users. Suppliers as well as buyers. Especially in the current environment, but beyond. Remote use of digital technologies in the procurement process has resulted in greater inclusiveness, collaboration and organisational agility. It enables us to get away from the routine and focus on value-added activities — and it is vitally important that we build on this progress” Nicholson concluded.

The Benefits with JAGGAER

- ➔ Central supplier management, sourcing and contract management eTendering solution
- ➔ DocuSign electronic signature functionality built into the workflow
- ➔ Safe and convenient usage during Covid-19 lockdown
- ➔ Advances Welsh Government’s digital action plan
- ➔ Demonstrates practical advantages to the broader public sector procurement community

Americas

+1 919 659 2600
sales@jaggaer.com

Europe

+43 1 80 490 80
dach_sales@jaggaer.com

MENA

+971 4 360 1398
info@tejari.com

APAC

+61 (2) 8072 0644
apac_sales@jaggaer.com