



December 2011

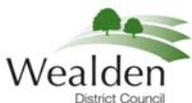
What is the Procurement Hub?

The East Sussex Procurement Hub (ESPH) was established in November 2010. The five District and Borough authorities of East Sussex came together to form a partnership which aims to establish best practice in procurement across the county and deliver savings and efficiencies through joint procurement.

By analysing spend and use of the contract database on the South East Business Portal a forward plan of procurement opportunities has been developed and will continue to develop, offering all authorities access to recognised best deals or achieving value through aggregation without sacrificing quality on the goods we buy, services we deliver and work we undertake.

We also aim to be reactive to the member councils priorities as they develop at this fundamental time of change in local government. Initiatives to increase revenue, improve contract performance and increase benefit to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the local supply chain are all underway.

Joint procurement doesn't mean joint services, whilst Local Authorities may look at ways of sharing services or providing services on behalf of other authorities, this is not what joint procurement delivers. Joint procurement delivers contracts with one or more suppliers on behalf of the identified need of all authorities, but the supplier relationship is with each individual authority.



South East Business Portal



The South East Business Portal (SEBP) is a free online tool for advertising opportunities and publishing current contract information. Suppliers are able to register free and gain access to our opportunities and those of other regions across the South East, making doing business with the Hub and East Sussex authorities more open and transparent.

Opportunities: The opportunities section can be used for tender Pre Qualification, open tenders, and market testing. Opportunities don't only have to be created for tenders, the SEBP can be particularly useful if you have a request that might not generate a lot of interest, or possibly a huge amount of interest, or if you wish to understand what suppliers can offer. Use of the portal makes the administration and communication of tenders much less burdensome. The system supports, Word, Excel, and Pdf allowing all documents (PQQ, ITT or supporting docs) to be uploaded and accessed by all interested parties. You can also issue clarifications and post answers to queries directly. Any potential supplier should be able to make a good assessment as to whether they have the ability to fulfill the contract.

Contract Store: As part of the transparency guidelines issued in March 2011, all 5 Hub members have produced a comprehensive contracts database on the SEBP, as a window for both businesses and the general public to inspect contract details. It helps businesses understand how and where we source the goods and services we buy and will lead to a reduction of FOI's and enquiries and an increase in opportunities for the local supply chain and getting businesses ready to develop services ready for re-tender.

If you would like more advice on helping you make the most of the SEBP, email Cathy.Nelson@wealden.gov.uk.

Forthcoming Contracts



Cash Collection.



Benchmarking our services and prices against other authorities has enabled us to understand what can be achieved through a joint contract. We are currently working with Rother, Hastings and Eastbourne to develop future requirements, which will be accessible to all members and ensure partnership working can bring further benefits over the contract lifespan.

A 4yr framework agreement will allow all partners to benefit over the course of the contract.

Procurement Start Date - February 2012

Contract Award - August 2012



Out of Hours Call Handling.

This service has been in need of review for a number of years at various authorities. Councils need to take advantage of the best ways of working and the technological advances made over the last 5+ years. It is an area which could bring real benefits from collaborative working.

4 authorities are collaborating with the Hub to develop this service.

We would like to hear from any service users that we haven't previously canvassed on their views regarding the current service.

Procurement Start Date - March 2012.

Contract Award - September 2012



Electoral Printing



A joint procurement amongst all 5 authorities which will service all elections and referenda over the next 6 years and any demands of the Localism Act. We aim to create a contract which not only delivers the service required by an individual authority but one that cultivates stronger partnership working with the successful supplier to ensure improvement and efficiencies are worked towards year after year.

Procurement Start Date - January 2012

Contract Award - August 2012

Best Deals and Forum

The hub has sourced a range of "best deals" available to authorities across East Sussex.

Best deals are those contracts or purchasing methods which are open to authorities to use at any time and have not only been market tested but also benchmarked against other contract arrangements or purchasing history in authorities up and down the country. The East Sussex Procurement Group (a forum of the Hub members, Brighton and East Sussex CC) originally developed this list in 2008 and has helped deliver £millions in savings over the past 3 years.

Current best deals include; Software Licenses, Energy (Gas and Electricity), Insurance, Consultants, Waste and Playground Equipment. But there are many more; for a list please get in touch.



We would like to hear from you too. The Hub was established because of the appetite to collaborate and share best practice so that every member can achieve the best value for what they buy. If you think you have negotiated a great deal from a supplier, or have found a new way of delivering the service which has led to efficiencies, please get in touch, you'd be surprised the success we've had just by facilitating this exchange of information so far.

Email - esph@wealden.gov.uk

Case Study: Council Tax Review

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The Hub has delivered savings to member authorities in excess of £350,000 in its first year and expects to achieve revenue increases on top of that of £200,000 by the end of 2011.

One of the initiatives we undertook was to work with the Revenues managers and East Sussex County Council to deliver a joint service for the review of all Council Tax Single Persons Discounts. This involved developing a specification together, agreeing a cost sharing mechanism, testing the market and ensuring best value was achieved through aggregating volume (80,000 records for review instead of 15,000 per authority) this not only achieved savings through running the procurement together (approx. £5,000 per authority), through the increased volume and ease with which a contractor could work with all authorities at once we achieved a cost for the service £35,000 below our initial benchmarking exercise.

The service started in October and it is anticipated this will deliver increased revenue to the authorities of £200,000 and over £1million to the East Sussex partnership.

PQQ and Guidance Toolkit

A primary requirement for delivering value in procurement whether on an individual basis or collectively as a partnership are effective processes and guidance. SMEs also need to be engaged helping them deliver greater innovation, smarter ways of delivering services and safeguarding investment in the local economy and community.

Aligned processes and tools allow everyone to work within the same parameters. We have gone one step further and developed both a joint procurement strategy and a resource for all authorities to make their purchases deliver greater value and quality to all. PQQ documents are the first to be developed. These include guidance for both suppliers and buyers to ensure that capability is assessed fairly in line with the demands of the contract and it is easier for buyers to assess that capability and enable effective shortlisting. By introducing these across the district and borough councils in East Sussex the workload will be substantially reduced for officers and doing business with the hub councils will be easier for all organisations including local suppliers and SMEs.

You can find these documents on the Hub Webpages (see column on right) , but the end user is important to us. If you have any comments on these or the proposed toolkit as it develops please email us at ian.roadnight@wealden.gov.uk.

Coming Soon: Not everyone has the time or requirement to brush up on procurement regulation and the developments within purchasing that enable us to get best value for the taxpayer and ensure our services and projects are delivered exactly how we envisioned them. To sit alongside new Contract Procedure Rules which it is hoped will be adopted in 2012, a handbook for all officers involved in purchasing and procurement will give a detailed view of how to select, engage with, manage and improve your supplier base, processes and contracts.

Web Pages



We are currently working on our Web Pages! Wealden District Council will host these pages where you will be able to access up to date information on our work programme, procurement news and resources to help make your life, and purchases, easier. The following resources will be available from early January, with further content uploaded over the next few months:-

Buyers Resources

- *Standard Pre- qualification questionnaires (PQQ) to use for all goods and services procurements*
- *Guidance for Buyers on Devising an effective PQQ document*
- *Guidance notes on Procurement Policy and best practice.*
- *Our current workplan and procurement strategy.*

Suppliers Resources

- *Guide for Suppliers*
- *Top tips for tendering with local authorities*
- *Guidance for Suppliers on completing a PQQ*

2012 / 2013

Work Programme

Temporary Accommodation: for April 2012

Grounds Maintenance: for end 2012

Invoice Rationalisation: for April 2012

ICT Hardware: for end 2012

Pest Control: for end 2012

Personal Protective Equipment: for June 2012

Advertising: for end 2012

Banking and Treasury Management 2013

Technical Consultants: for Jan 2013

Coastal Protection Works: for 2013

Council Tax Printing: for April 2013

Insurance: End 2012 for 2014

Housing Adaptations: for April 2013

Construction & Building Maintenance: for April 2013



Latest News

GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT SERVICE

Colleagues are no doubt aware of the newly-formed Government Procurement Service (GPS), which has taken over the role previously undertaken by Buying Solutions. For more details, see <http://www.buyingsolutions.gov.uk/aboutus/>

The Government Procurement Service will be taking more of a Category Management approach to Procurement in the future. This complements their role as the mandatory aggregated procurement provider for Central Government departments. There are separate category overviews for Central Government Departments and the wider public sector, which includes local authorities, which can be found at http://www.buyingsolutions.gov.uk/frameworks/cat_overview.html

Information regarding framework contracts has been re-organised by category and you can download a current list from the GPS web-site, as well as a separate list of forthcoming and planned procurements:

- Current - http://www.buyingsolutions.gov.uk/frameworks/by_category.html
- Planned - http://www.buyingsolutions.gov.uk/frameworks/procurement_plan.html

Other Buying Organisations letting frameworks on behalf of local government include [ESPO](#), [YPO](#) and [SEC](#).
(click on name to access their websites)

We Need You!

Please help us understand your procurement needs better.

What baffles you?

How do you manage suppliers?

How confident are you in your knowledge?

What are your priorities and drivers for change?

Click on this [link](#) to complete a 10 minute survey; it will help us help you.

Who are the Procurement Hub?



Ian Cathy Gerry

ESPH is based at the Council Offices of Wealden District Council. Details on how to contact us can be found at the bottom of this newsletter.

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