



HOW TO DO BUSINESS WITH PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL

A guide for local businesses

PETERBOROUGH

CITY COUNCIL

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1. Introduction

Peterborough City Council (PCC) provides a wide range of services to a community of circa 180,000 people who reside in the Peterborough area. This means that there is a significant demand for the supply of goods, works and services. To support these services PCC spends in excess of £200m per year with various organisations to help support the services delivered to the Peterborough community.

PCC is committed to utilising its financial asset to create a diverse and highly competitive supply network that delivers value for money and a capability that can deliver the services required for the community it serves.

This goes to the heart of PCC's plans in becoming a commissioning-led council, in essence utilising its supply network to help deliver services; already PCC commission's leisure and culture to Vivacity, and refuse collection and street cleaning to Amey.

PCC recognises the important contribution that small businesses can make in delivering public services and the vital role these businesses play in the local Peterborough economy, thus supporting the commissioning-led approach.

This guide is designed to help local businesses understand how PCC makes procurement decisions and support the participation of those local businesses in appropriate procurement activities.

2. Contracting Rules

All contracts let by PCC have to comply with either our internal governance, commonly termed contract rules, or the European Public Contract Regulations (PCR). All procurement activity undertaken by PCC has to comply with the procedures in accordance with the contract rules and relevant PCRs. The procedures within the contract rules can be waived via Cabinet Decision or by Emergency Procedures; it is worth noting that the European Procurement Directives overrule the contract regulations.

The procurement process detailed in the contract rules is divided into two categories:

- Procurement activity with a contract value of £5k to under £50k
- Procurement activity above a contract value of £50k to EU threshold

The detailed process around these divisions can differ significantly depending upon what is being bought and any associated risks with the procurement.

2.1 Procurement activity below a contract value of £50k

The contract rules stipulates that any officer undertaking any procurement activity within these financial parameters, must obtain a minimum of 3 quotations.

2.2 Procurement activity above a contract value of £50k

If any procurement activity is initiated within these financial parameters PCC's Commercial & Procurement department is informed and will either act in an advisory capacity to Council officers or will be responsible for undertaking the procurement itself. The process will be more comprehensive with the appropriate documentation being produced such as an Invitation to Tender and supporting Service Specification as a minimum.

2.3 Procurement activity above EU threshold

Any procurement activity initiated that meets the contract value thresholds published by the European Union and detailed in table 1 places an obligation on PCC to undertake that procurement activity in line with the Public Contract Regulations 2015. PCC is free to choose the most appropriate process within those regulations for its given procurement requirements. These types of procurement activities are heavily governed and follow a strict process as detailed in those same regulations.

Table 1 OJEU Thresholds for Public sector contracting authorities.

| | SUPPLIES | SERVICES | WORKS |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Public Sector contracting authorities | £172,514 €207,000 | £172,514 €207,000 | £4,322,012 €5,186,000 |
| Social & Other specific services | N/A | £625,050 €750,000 | N/A |

3. Advertising Procurement Opportunities

There has been recent reforms within the PCRs that are aimed at making more public sector contracts accessible, particular to smaller businesses. These reforms place transparency obligations on PCC which means that new procurement opportunities will be available in one place; the Contracts Finder portal. In addition, contract award information relating to the winning contractor will also be available on Contracts Finder.

As well as advertising opportunities on Contracts Finder, PCC will continue to advertise opportunities on Source Cambridgeshire. www.sourcecambridgeshire.co.uk/

The Contracts Finder portal was launched in 2015 and can be found at www.gov.uk/contracts-finder

3.1 Thresholds for publishing opportunities

The PCR does give threshold limits for which contracts are to be advertised; the contract value limit for PCC is set at £25,000.

3.3 Specific requirements for placing contract opportunities on Contracts Finder

For below EU threshold contracts, the requirement to publish does not apply where PCC is making an opportunity know to a closed group of suppliers who have already been selected onto a Framework Agreement or Dynamic Purchasing System.

Where PCC is satisfied it is lawful not to advertise the opportunity, and chooses not to advertise at all, the requirement to advertise on Contract Finder does not apply to that contract. This may be the case where, for example, If PCC within its Contract Rules states that advertising is not required for contracts below a certain amount, and there is no legal requirement to advertise the contract.

This means that, for example, *if PCC is dealing with a procurement below £50,000, its contract rules state that contracts below £50,000 need not be advertised; it is satisfied there is no legal requirement to advertise, and it does not voluntarily advertise the procurement, then there is no requirement to advertise on Contracts Finder.*

If the opportunity appears on other portals, for example, Source Cambridgeshire, or Tenders Direct portal, PCC will advertise the opportunity within 24 hours of the time advertised.

For all opportunities either above or below EU thresholds, please refer to the regulations to determine the appropriate requirements for making procurement opportunities available.

4. How to apply for Procurement Opportunities

You can apply for procurement opportunities in a variety of ways:

- By responding to an advertised opportunity either via Source Cambridgeshire or through Contracts Finder.
- By responding to a formal advertisement placed on the Official Journal of the European Union.
- By submitting an interest to work with PCC via the following e-mail address;
commercialandprocurement@peterborough.gov.uk.

You will receive a response back from the Procurement team within 24 hours acknowledging your response and advising of the next steps. If there is not a procurement opportunity available at that time you may be asked to complete a simple questionnaire giving us sufficient information that enables the procurement team to advise you of the right opportunity.

Your information will be stored on a supplier database so that when an opportunity arises we can research that database and link your services to an opportunity.

Should you wish to arrange a meeting with the procurement team please send an e-mail to commercialandprocurement@peterborough.gov.uk clearly stating the reasons for the request and suitable dates available to you. Please do not send any corporate brochures via e-mail until it has been requested.

5. Bidding for business with PCC

The concept of bidding for business with a local authority can be a daunting process full of bureaucratic paperwork. PCC will, where it can, attempt to remove any unnecessary burden on local businesses within the tender process.

The information requested of local business will either be because of requirements in regulation or contract rules or it is required to feature in the decision making process to enable an contract award to be made.

So what can you expect?

- To be treated fairly with all other bidders in the process
- Clear and transparent communication
- Full and professional Invitation to Tender (ITT) which will comprise of;
 - ITT document detailing the governance of the procurement process (inc Evaluation process and time lines, non-compliance)
 - Service Specification or any technical documentation that explains the requirements needed.
 - Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (If required)
 - Terms & Conditions of contract.
- Clear guidance on how to respond to the requirements asked for.

For those local businesses unsuccessful in any procurement opportunity, PCC will commit to offering a de-briefing session to enable businesses to transfer any learnings from those unsuccessful bids which may help them in any future bids with PCC and potentially other local authorities.

6. How to find out when a PCC contract award has been made

Wherever there is an obligation to do so, PCC will complete contract award notices above £25,000.00 and will be post on Contracts Finder www.gov.uk/contracts-finder and Source Cambridgeshire www.sourcecambridgeshire.co.uk/.

All contract awards above the OJEU thresholds detailed in in table 1 of section 2.3 and for which an advertisement has been placed, will be posted online. www.tendersdirect.co.uk

7. Frameworks

PCC, like many Public Authorities, utilises an array of frameworks made available to them. Prior to deciding whether a framework is the most suitable option, PCC will evaluate it alongside other sourcing options available to them.

A list of frameworks regularly researched are detailed in the table below:

| Website | URL |
|--|---|
| A Crown website for School Buildings, Education Agency Funding Framework | https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/education-funding-agency-contractors-framework |
| East Midlands Property Agents Framework | http://www.em-pa.org.uk/frameworks/introduction/ |
| Eastern Shires Purchasing organisation | https://www.espo.org/Frameworks |
| Crown Commercial Services Framework | http://ccs-agreements.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ |
| Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation Framework | http://www.ypo.co.uk/contracts-home/all-contracts |
| NHS Frameworks | https://www.sbs.nhs.uk/procurement |
| Midlands Highways Alliance | http://www.mhaweb.org.uk/work-streams/medium-schemes/ |
| Eastern Highways Alliance | No website available |

8. For further Information

Please contact the Procurement department

T: 01733 384588 E: commercialandprocurement@peterborough.gov.uk