

Identifying Barriers to Winning Council Business 2012

You Said	We Did
<p>You would like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opportunity to meet with procurement to increase knowledge of opportunities to work together • A fuller understanding of the procurement meets of different departments in the Council. 	<p>Category Managers and Procurement Specialists are working with Services to gain a better understanding of their short term and longer term needs. Meetings with a number of suppliers have already taken place and will continue as the relationship develops</p>
<p>You want:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More notification of opportunities • Clarity regarding where they tenders are advertised • More information regarding opportunities • To be sent information letting you know when contracts are out for tender. 	<p>All council quotation opportunities over £1,000 are now advertised on Public Contracts Scotland – Quick Quote: www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk</p> <p>All council tender opportunities are now advertised on Public Contracts Scotland - Tender: www.publictendersscotland.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk</p>
<p>You said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We should consider our local suppliers • We should think about the impact on local residents whose jobs are at risk if tenders are won by firms outside the local area. • There is a belief that WL Council are committed to National contracts with National Companies and that as a result SME's are overlooked and not responded to when the bid for work. 	<p>The Modernising Procurement Review 2011 increased the Tender threshold to £50,000. For procurements below this value, the council now use Quick Quote – the Scottish Governments “on line quotation” facility. Council Services will be encouraged to request quotes from local suppliers.</p> <p>The use of lotting within council tenders to ensure that SME's have an equal chance of success.</p>
<p>Your experience of Procurement was positive but:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there was not consistency regarding engagement with other departments. • there are issues with the process of procuring small value services. 	<p>Category Managers and Procurement Specialists are working with Services to ensure that fair and equitable procurement processes are put into practice</p>

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<p>You Said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We should have a more positive attitude. • There is a lack of communication and too much paperwork • Tendering procedures have become too complex. • Negative experiences with tenders being submitted in hard copy and having to pay to get a copy of the invitation to tender. • There is a failure to understand the cost impact of tendering for work. • That some tenders are not operated on a 'level playing field' basis. 	<p>Category Managers and Procurement Specialists are continually reviewing the tender process and making improvements and enhancements.</p> <p>Category Managers and Procurement Specialists are keen to meet with contractors, suppliers and service providers to gain a better understanding of their business and on going contact is being made.</p> <p>The council no longer charges for tender documentation and electronic tendering continues to be developed.</p>
<p>You would like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single point of contact. • To have the opportunity to speak to someone dealing with tenders directly and not to have to go through the main switchboard. • Clarity of who to contact to discuss if your services are required / suitable. 	<p>There is now a direct telephone number for the Corporate Procurement Unit and this has been made public: http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/3078/Corporate-Procurement-Unit?contactid=3387</p> <p>Category Manager and Procurement Specialist information has been made public: http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/3089/PU-Contacts</p> <p>Meet the Buyer programmes to be arranged and however a Procurement Surgery has been established and full details have been made public: http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/3077/Supplier-Development</p>
<p>You Said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of communication between departments. • There is no overlap with regards to working with more than one department within the Council. 	<p>Category Managers and Procurement Specialists are now working with Services. Category Managers now attend Service Management Teams and other management Meetings.</p> <p>Procurement Board established.</p>
<p>With regards to Public Contracts Scotland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since PCS started you are missing changed to price tenders in your trade. • There is still a lack of understanding around the PCS process • There is too much emphasis on certification rather than ability and experience. • There is a need for more detailed information on how to use PCS to receive and return tender documentation. 	<p>The Corporate Procurement Unit have undertaken training and will continue to do to ensure contractors, suppliers and service providers are familiar and comfortable with the National Portal and the tendering process</p> <p>Ongoing training particularly for SME's and the voluntary sector.</p>

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<p>Regarding size and turnover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is concern that the size of business turnover will meet some of the PQQ criteria for certain tenders • SME's feel that there is a barrier to increasing turnover and achieving growth when a certain level of turnover is required to tender for new work. 	<p>In line with Scottish Procurement guidance, West Lothian Council will only use financial strength as a method of last resort where this is essential for award of contract.</p>
<p>There was concern over the requirement to be a Member of Constructionline and pay membership to an organisation just to receive council tenders</p>	<p>The council's Standing Orders and Procurement Procedures have been updated. Membership with Constructionline is now not a mandatory requirement.</p>
<p>With regards to costing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracts are always awarded to the lowest priced tender. • Other aspects of the tender such as quality are not considered. 	<p>Category Managers and Procurement Specialists advocate the use of the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) to Services.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is concern over the link with Scotland Excel procurement. • Feeling that Scotland Excel is based against small business and that companies that were too small were unable to apply. 	<p>The council attend Scotland Excel User Intelligence Groups and will try and influence strategy to ensure that small and medium businesses are not disadvantaged and have an equal opportunity of gaining business</p>
<p>You Said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a lack of confidence in tendering against larger organisations. • Practical advice on managing the WLC procurement process would be helpful. • There would be increased interested in the procurement process if the council wanted to tender business to local SME's. • There is demand for advice on how to format a winning tender. 	<p>The Corporate Unit will continue to deliver regular training for local, SME's and the third sector and will review feedback to ensure that it is fit for purpose and meets changing needs.</p> <p>The Supplier Development Programme (http://www.sdpscotland.co.uk/) also delivers training for businesses who want to improve their tendering skills.</p>