

How to do business with Warwick District Council

A Guide for Suppliers and Service Providers

Introduction.

This guide has been produced to assist prospective tenderers who wish to bid for contracts with Warwick District Council. It provides an insight into our tendering procedures for supplies and services and gives potential suppliers information about what opportunities might exist for doing business with Warwick District Council.

At the link below, further information is available about the goods and services that we plan to procure in the upcoming year with a list of contact names, and details attached to each item if you want to find out more. This list is not an invitation to tender, but aims to provide advice for our suppliers and potential suppliers about our anticipated requirements.

Providing Best Value for Warwick District Council

In April 2000 the government introduced a new regime for all councils called "Best Value". All council services must be reviewed to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness in the way in which they are provided. In order to do this, we must ensure that the way we deliver our services satisfies the needs of our customers, and is based upon an assessment of our performance in relation to other providers. Once any review has been carried out, and all evidence gathered a decision is then taken on the best way forward.

For the Procurement team this means that we will offer advice on the contractual method of service delivery which will most likely deliver "Best Value" to the public.

If a decision is made to change a part, or the whole of an area of service provision, which involves a tendering procedure, we have a duty to ensure that the contract demonstrates "Best Value" and continuous improvement. We also recognise that alternative providers can often add value to the process based on their own experience and we will work to draw this out via our contractual arrangements.

Warwick District Council is obliged to provide information to suppliers which relates to the process of bidding for contracts. The following are the key elements which contractors should be aware of.

PUBLIC SECTOR PROCUREMENT RULES AND REGULATIONS

European Rules

All public sector contracts, no matter what their value within the European Union are covered by a treaty which incorporates the free movement of goods and services and which prevents discrimination against firms on the grounds of nationality.

The Council is obliged to follow some basic principles:

For supplies and specific services over a specific contract cost, a Tender Notice must be placed in the supplement to the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) to give all providers within the EU an opportunity to tender.

Tenders must be invited in accordance with one of the prescribed procedures (open, restricted, negotiated - there are also two separate urgency procedures). Each procedure imposes minimum time scales covering the tender activities to ensure that

reasonable time is given to interested parties to respond to advertisements and prepare submissions.

* A notice of contract award must be placed in the OJEU, and unsuccessful contractors must be debriefed if requested.

The thresholds are reviewed every two years.

Local Rules

Procurement activities must also comply with the Councils own Standing Orders and Corporate Procurement Strategy.

Where required, contracts will be advertised and will be subject to competitive tenders being obtained. Tender documents will provide details of the requirements. Tenders can be restricted and invited from some or all respondents to advertisements providing they comply with the selection criteria.

All tenders must be submitted in a plain sealed envelope endorsed with the title of the specific tender and without any mark which could reveal the tenderers identity.

Application Forms

Questionnaires are often used as a means of assessing and shortlisting applicants for select tender lists for supplies and specific service contracts.

The forms are not limited as to what information is requested but will usually include the following:

- **General Information:** The general information requested provides basic details about a prospective tenderer and verifies that it can be identified as a legitimate, discrete trading organisation.
- **Financial Information:** Companies will be asked for certain financial information relating to the recent historical performance of the company, normally the last two years. Private and Public Limited Companies must submit fully audited accounts as registered at Companies House. Other applicants will be requested to submit copies of financial statements, business plans and/or a certified statement of turnover.

This information is used to assess the financial position of the organisation in relation to the size of contract. Information is also required to check that an organisation is registered (if appropriate) for tax purposes and complies with specific insurance requirements.

- **Technical Resources and References Information** is requested to enable the council to assess the resources a prospective tenderer has at its disposal to carry out the contract. By taking up references the council will be able to make an assessment of past performance.
- **Equal Opportunities** The council strongly supports equal opportunity, equal access and positive outcomes for all sections of the community and aims to ensure that organisations that provide services on behalf of Warwick District Council comply with equal opportunity legislation and promote equality of opportunity.
- The council also aims to encourage those organisations with which it does business to observe and adhere to the councils principles contained within the

councils Race Equality Scheme. Questions will be asked about how race equality issues are included in any potential suppliers of employment practices.

- Health and Safety Depending upon the nature of the goods and/or services, prospective tenderers will be required to submit a health and safety policy which refers to health and safety legislation signed by a senior representative. Historical data may also be requested which indicates their record and performance in health and safety issues.
- Declaration The prospective tenderer will be required to sign a declaration that the information supplied is accurate and that there has been no collusion in preparing the tender.

Tendering For Contracts

If an organisation is successful in applying for a tender, a set of tender documents will be forwarded. On occasions the council may use an open tendering procedure. This means that that all applicants will be invited to tender for the contract. The information submitted will be considered together with the tender bid at the same time. The tender documents will typically consist of all or some of the following:

- Letter of Invitation: This will advise where, and by when, tenders should be submitted.
- Instructions to Tenderers: This provides guidance for completing the tender documentation.
- Form of Tender: the Company's agreement to the terms and conditions of the tender.
- Terms and Conditions of Contract: Defines how the council will let the contract, the rules the tenderer must comply with and the relationship between the council and the successful contractor.
- Specification: Sets out what needs to be achieved including policies, procedures or guidelines to be followed. It sets out the performance standards and outcomes expected.
- Schedule of Rates: The pricing document where the tenderer enters their price for performance of the contract.
- Quality requirements/ Method statements: Defines how a company intends to provide the supplies or service, and provides evidence demonstrating relevant experience and capacity. This will be used in evaluating the bid. A company will be expected to demonstrate its commitment to council policies as outlined in the documentation.
- Any other relevant information

Tender Evaluation and Contract Award

All tenders received by the closing time for tenders will be evaluated against the relevant criteria. The Council shall only award a contract that meets the Council's statutory or approved objectives and priorities; and where there is the best value for money, except contracts where lowest price was pre-determined to be the appropriate criteria.

The successful tenderer will be notified via E Portal CSWJETS

- Debriefing: Within the limits of commercial confidentiality, the council will always endeavour to offer unsuccessful tenderers feedback on their bids. Information will normally be fed back by the council's Procurement Manager and this may be used to assist any future bids.
- Electronic Trading: The Council has increased the levels of electronic trading (tendering, ordering, invoicing) it undertakes. The aim is to reduce the costs associated with procurement processes for both the Council and its suppliers. The Council will seek to work with suppliers to help deliver its e-Commerce strategy. The Council believes that embracing e-commerce would open up suppliers products and services to a wider market.
- Contract Monitoring: Suppliers and contractors will be monitored to assess their compliance any service level agreement forming part of any contract. Contracts have to be performed in accordance with the requirements set out in the documentation. Contract conditions will be strictly applied.
- The Council is continuously striving to improve its performance in all aspects of the organisation and it expects its contractors to do likewise.

If you are interested in receiving tender documents and bidding for procurement opportunities with Warwick District Council ,can you kindly register on our E Portal

<http://www.csw-jets.co.uk/> and <https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder>

Further Queries

Please contact:

John Roberts

Procurement Manager

Warwick District Council, Riverside House, Milverton Hill, Royal Leamington Spa. CV32 5HZ

Tel.: 01926 456201 www.warwickdc.gov.uk

COMPLETING A TENDER

[Tender awareness Comon tendering mistakes presentation.ppt](#)

TIPS AND PTFALLS

- Answer the question - it is that simple
- Explain clearly what you will provide, how you will provide it and why it is the right solution
- Show systems, capabilities and people necessary
- Provide **relevant** case studies, data and references

Successful tendering

what we look for

- A complete tender submission (all documents)
- Received by the deadline
- No qualifications to stated Terms & Conditions

Successful Tendering

Pitfalls & Common Mistakes

- Missing documents (incomplete tenders)
- Questions not understood
- Questions not answered
- Supplier not understood the specification
- Documents not checked prior to submission

- Has the supplier.....
- Understood what we are looking for?
- Demonstrated their ability to meet requirements?
- Demonstrated value for money?
- demonstrated quality & reliability

Successful Tendering

Basic Tips

- Answer the question - it is that simple
- Explain clearly what you will provide, how you will provide it and why it is the right solution
- Show systems, capabilities and people necessary
- Provide **relevant** case studies, data and references

Successful Tendering

Approach

- Review all documentation
- Query anything you are unsure of (asap)
- Checklist & Deadlines
- Evaluation Criteria
- Pricing
- Timing (don't leave it until the last minute)
- Unique Selling Point (USP) – why you?
-

Successful Tendering

Check List

- Check the Instructions
- Answered all sections
- Evidence
- Clarification
- Pricing
- Timescales
- Signatures

Successful Tendering

Key Messages

- Read the requirements
- Don't be afraid to ask questions (clarification)
- Read the questions (re-read)
- Answer all questions
- Make sure you have answered the question
- Get it proof read – someone not involved
- Invitation to Tender (ITT) pack will include:
- Instructions to Tenderers
- Introduction from buyer who will set out the vision
- The Specification
- The Evaluation Criteria & Relative Weighting
- Form of Tender
- Draft Contract Terms and Conditions
- Declarations / Bona Fide
- Pricing Schedule

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Example of Good & Weak Answers

Do you have a Health & Safety Policy?

Weak Answer:

- "Yes, see Appendix 1"

Good Answer:

- "The Health & Safety of our staff and customers is a vital part of the company's quality process. We operate a comprehensive Health & Safety Policy (see Appendix 1) covering all aspects of our products (services) and operations and it is reviewed biannually."

For an SME employing less than 5 people: "Although we are not required legally to have a Health & Safety Policy, we take this matter very seriously and have adopted a Health & Safety Policy in the interests of our staff and clients"

Example of Good & Weak Answers

What Quality Assurance arrangements does your company operate? If no accreditation is held please explain why not and what alternative steps you take to ensure quality at work?

Weak Answer:

"We operate our own quality system. We have determined that formal accreditation is inappropriate to our company's needs. Complaints are the responsibility of the Managing Director."

Good Answer:

"We regard quality as a vitally important part of our business activity and we operate a comprehensive and strict internal quality assurance process covering all aspects of our business activity (details can be found in Appendix 2). We are committed to a process of continuous improvement and we are in the process of applying for ISO 9001 (we expect to be assessed in May of this year)"