



SELLING YOUR SERVICES TO Stafford Borough Council



Stafford
BOROUGH COUNCIL



**A guide to potential
suppliers in selling
to Stafford
Borough Council**





CONTENTS PAGE

Selling Your Services to Stafford Borough Council

SECTION one	Background	PAGE 4
SECTION two	What the Council Buys	PAGE 4
SECTION three	Advertising	PAGE 5
SECTION four	Quotations and Financial Thresholds	PAGE 5
SECTION five	Types of Tender	PAGE 5
SECTION six	How to Apply	PAGE 6
SECTION seven	The Tendering Process	PAGE 6
SECTION eight	Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy	PAGE 8
SECTION nine	Sustainability and Environmental Impact	PAGE 9
SECTION ten	Health and Safety	PAGE 9
SECTION eleven	Human Rights	PAGE 9
SECTION twelve	Data Protection	PAGE 10
SECTION thirteen	Insurance	PAGE 10
SECTION fourteen	How We Pay Our Contractors and Suppliers	PAGE 10
SECTION fifteen	Contact Us	PAGE 10

SECTION one

BACKGROUND

Stafford Borough Council spent approximately £2.7 million on a range of goods and services in the financial year 2003 / 04. Obtaining best value is an essential requirement and one that cannot be achieved without the support of suppliers.

The Council buys goods and services from a wide range of suppliers. Contracts vary from small one-off purchases to large supplies or service contracts.

We are always keen to hear from new suppliers, and aim to provide you with the information and opportunities needed to compete for a share of Stafford Borough Council's business.

Of course, success cannot be guaranteed; that depends on the quality, cost and availability of your products and services, as well as your organisation's equality, sustainability and health and safety policies. We hope you will find this guidance a useful introduction.

The Council is keen to encourage participation by small and medium enterprises, the voluntary and community sectors, and to work with suppliers to deliver community benefits in a way that is consistent with best value and in compliance with procurement law.

Stafford Borough Council is committed to supporting local businesses and organisations by placing orders for goods and services with them where possible. It is also committed to sustainability – taking into account, for instance, environmental impact.

This is your opportunity to try and increase your turnover and profitability and to be part of a vibrant local economy, which will be beneficial to both you and the community the Council serves. We are sure you will understand our desire to provide all sections of the community with the best possible services, achieving value for money at all times in respect of quality, guarantees, product benefits and service back-up.

This Guide has been produced to assist suppliers and contractors who wish to supply Stafford Borough Council with goods, works and services. The Council is committed to ensuring best value from all the goods, works and services it buys and this guide is designed to provide potential suppliers with the information required to facilitate a smooth tendering process.

- > It outlines rules the council must follow
- > It explains where opportunities to tender can be found
- > It explains how to tender
- > It gives details of how to contact us

SECTION two

WHAT THE COUNCIL BUYS

Listed below are some of the typical purchases that the council makes:

Goods

Computer hardware
Computer software
Stationery supplies
Office and printing paper products
Mobile phones
Photocopiers
Car parking and enforcement equipment
Office furniture and equipment
Corporate and protective clothing

Works

Property maintenance
Small construction contracts

Services

Consultancy services
Training services
Refuse collection
External printing
Agency staff
Advertising
Insurance
Office cleaning services
Window cleaning
Telephone
Utilities

SECTION three

ADVERTISING

To comply with the Council’s constitution and the EC Procurement Directives, Stafford Borough Council is required to advertise tenders in local publications and, for contracts worth more than £153,376 (currently for services) and £3,834,411 (currently for works), in the Supplement to the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU). Access to this document is only available electronically and further information is available from <http://ted.europa.eu/int/static/home/en/homepage/ini>. In the future the council is planning to place all tender advertisements on its website.

SECTION four

QUOTATIONS AND FINANCIAL THRESHOLDS

The estimated value of a contract over its lifetime determines the procedures that Council Officers need to follow. The value determines how many quotes we need to obtain or whether a tender process is required. Details of the current threshold levels in operation at Stafford Borough Council (SBC) are as follows:

Estimated contract value	Action required by SBC
Up to £10,000	Minimum 3 quotations
£10,001 to £100,000	Competitive written tenders from 5 suppliers from the approved list or 4 suppliers by advertisement or open competitive tendering
Above £100,000	Competitive written tenders from 5 suppliers from the approved list or 4 suppliers by advertisement or open competitive tendering
Above £153,376 (from 1/1/04 until 31/12/05)	An OJEU advert must be placed

SECTION five

TYPES OF TENDER

The Council uses three types of tender – open, selective and negotiated.

Open

All suppliers who respond to an advertisement are supplied with tender documentation. This approach is usually followed when purchasing standard items (such as goods where the value is below the EU threshold).

Selective

This is a two stage approach in which interested suppliers are assessed before inviting a limited number of them to tender. This restricted route may be used for non-standard or large goods and service requirements, where it would not be economic for all parties concerned if too large a tender field was invited to bid.

Stage one - this will involve potential contractors being vetted for suitability and this will normally be undertaken by issuing a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ). A selection panel will assess your suitability as a supplier, which will include scrutiny of the following key areas that will be extended depending on the nature of the goods or services being purchased:

- > Company details
- > Technical ability
- > Financial standing
- > Equalities
- > Health and safety
- > Sustainability and environmental issues
- > Insurance cover
- > References
- > Previous experience

Stage two - short-listed suppliers will be provided with tender documents and invited to tender against a specification. You will be required to complete and return the necessary documentation by a given date and time. Tenders received after this time will not be considered and notification of

rejection will be given. An evaluation panel will evaluate all tenders received against pre-determined evaluation criteria, which will include reference to the particular needs of the contract being considered. The Council will award the contract to the supplier it considers offers best value against the award criteria.

Contract evaluation may be on the basis of either the most economically advantageous tender in terms of the criteria that has been pre-determined, or lowest price. However it will be quite rare for a tender to be accepted on the basis of price only.

Negotiated

These cover complex projects such as major redevelopments.

E-tendering

At present, we are unable to accept tenders, which are submitted electronically. You may request that tender documents be sent to you via email to assist in their completion. However a hard copy of the completed tender document, together with the tender envelope we provide must be completed and returned by the tender closing date.

SECTION six

HOW TO APPLY

- Look for details of tenders in local newspapers and, in the future, on the Council's website.
- The tender advertisement will detail the relevant contact within the Council. Contact this person to express an interest, or, if on the website, the relevant information will be provided online.
- You will then be sent details of the tender and instructions on how to apply. The tender documents the Council sends out to suppliers contain details of the requirements. The contract documents, particularly the specification, should be read carefully

and all information completed fully and accurately. If you have any queries regarding any part of the contract documents you should contact the Council Officer named in the documentation and request further information. This has to be done before the tender period closes.

- For contracts in the OJEU publication apply to the email address given.

SECTION seven

THE TENDERING PROCESS

For contracts not exceeding £10,000

- A quotation will be sent direct to the appropriate Head of Service.
- The Head of Service will record and maintain full details of all quotations received.
- The Head of Service will accept the most financially favourable quotation unless the Council or Cabinet resolves otherwise.

For contracts exceeding £10,000 but not exceeding £100,000

- The competitive written tender must be sent to the appropriate Head of Service in a sealed plain envelope having the words "Tender" on it with the title of the contract.
- The Head of Law and Administration will record and maintain full details of the tenders received in the tender register.
- The Head of Service may accept the most financially favourable tender for contracts not exceeding £100,000.

For contracts over £100,000

- The competitive written tender must be sent to the appropriate Head of Service

in a sealed plain envelope having the words "Tender" on it with the title of the contract.

- The Head of Law and Administration will record and maintain full details of the tenders received in the tender register.
- The Head of Service will agree the best option in terms of the requirements stipulated for the contract; these can include cost, quality, service issues etc.

Selective tendering – approved contractors

The list of approved contractors will:

- Be compiled and maintained by the Council.
- Contain the names of all persons or bodies who wish to be included and who are approved by the Council.
- Indicate in respect of a person or body whose name is so included, the categories of contract and the values or amounts in respect of those categories for which approval has been given.

Invitations to tender for a contract will be sent to:

- Not less than 5 of those persons or bodies selected by the Council from among those approved for a contract of the relevant category and amount or value or,
- Where fewer than 5 persons or bodies are approved for a contract of the relevant category and amount and value, all of those persons or bodies.

Selective tendering – by advertisement

The public notice for selective tendering by advertisement shall specify:

- Details of the contract into which the Council wishes to enter.
- Persons or bodies interested, to apply for permission to tender and,

- A time value, being not less than 14 days, within which such applications are to be submitted to the Council.

After the expiry of the period specified in the public notice, invitations to tender for the contract will be sent to:

- Not less than 4 or the person or bodies who applied for permission to tender, selected by the Council or,
- Where fewer than 4 persons or bodies have applied or are considered suitable, those persons or bodies which the Council considers suitable.

Open tendering

At least 14 days public notice will be given to one or more local newspapers or appropriate trade journals. The notice will state:

- The nature and purpose of the contract.
- Where further details can be obtained.
- That tenders for the contract are invited.
- The last date and time when tenders can be received.

Submission of tenders

Tenders will only be received if they are enclosed in a plain sealed envelope which bears the mark "Tender" – followed by the subject to which it relates but no other name or mark indicating the sender.

The tenders will be kept in the custody of the Head of Law and Administration until the time and date of their specified opening.

The Head of Law and Administration will keep a record of all tenders received.

No tender will be considered valid unless it is received before the date and time specified for its return.

Opening of tenders

Tenders will be opened at the same time in the presence of two officers of the Council. In addition for tenders over £100,000 the appropriate Cabinet member or nominated substitute as well.

Acceptance of tenders

A tender other than the lowest tender if payment is to be made by the Council, or the highest tender if payment is to be received by the Council, will not be accepted except as authorised by the Council, the Cabinet or a Committee authorised in that behalf, having considered a report by the appropriate Head of Service or Director or other authorised person.

Your tender will be evaluated against pre-determined criteria and will focus on the demands of the Client and how you propose to deliver the required specification. Selection of suppliers is based on those whose tender, in the opinion of the Council, is the most economically advantageous in terms of price, quality, functionality, and service or other factors contained in the evaluation criteria. These criteria are provided in order that you may be aware of them and focus your tender accordingly. You will be contacted by letter informing you whether you have been successful or unsuccessful. We will always endeavour to explain why the tender was not acceptable and suggest improvement for future tender submissions.

Contracts register

A register of all contracts will be kept and maintained by Financial Planning. The register will specify for each contract:

- The name of the contractor.
- The works to be executed or the goods to be supplied.
- The contract value.

Contract documentation

All contracts will be entered into by the Head of Law and Administration.

All contracts will be signed off by the appropriate Head of Service.

All contracts over £100,000 must be by Deed.



SECTION eight

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY POLICY

The Council is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all people irrespective of sex, age, race or disability.

The Council is keen to ensure that its suppliers abide by the law and are working to best practice in this area.

All suppliers, as part of the tender process, will be required to provide evidence that they have equal opportunities policies in place and are committed to them.

This includes compliance with Sex Discrimination Act (1975 extended 1999), Race Relations Act (1976), Equal Pay Act (1970), Race Relations Amendments Act (2000), Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998), the Code of Practice on Age Diversity in Employment (1999), Disability Discrimination Act (1995), Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations and Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations.

The contractor will indemnify the Council against all actions, costs, expenses, claims, proceedings, and demands which may be brought against the Council for any breach of statutory duty under these Acts which arise from acts or omissions by the Contractor or their servants and agents under the Contract.

SECTION nine

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The Government's definition of "value for money" in the context of procurement is "the optimum combination of whole-life cost and quality (or fitness for purpose) to meet the user's requirement". Procurement therefore has a far broader meaning than that of purchasing, buying or commissioning. It is about securing services and products that best meet the needs of the users and the local community in its widest sense. Stafford Borough Council therefore takes sustainability as well as cost and quality into account when choosing suppliers.

Local government expenditure on goods, works and services has significant economic, social and environmental impacts. Minimising our impact in these areas, and where possible having a positive influence, helps to improve local quality of life and promote sustainable development. The cornerstone of sustainability is achieving development and progress that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The Local Government Act 2000 gives local authorities the power and duty to promote or improve the well being of the local area and contribute to achieving sustainable development in the UK.

We, as a Council, consequently aim to purchase goods and services that reflect best practice specifications or standards for environmental and social sustainability. We consider the whole-life costs of products when we select a supplier. Energy efficient products for example have an increased capital cost that is more than offset over time by reduced operational costs.

When applying for certain Council contracts, you may be requested to supply evidence of your practices and procedures as they relate to the environment.

SECTION ten

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Council is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its employees and that of all others affected by its undertakings. Contracts to supply goods or services will only be awarded to contractors who can satisfy the Council requirements in terms of resources required and their health and safety competence. Successful contractors / suppliers are expected to demonstrate compliance with current health and safety legislation including:

- A commitment to the health and safety of its employees, client and others.
- Up to date health and safety policy and procedures.
- Adequate risk assessments processes.
- An adequate system for monitoring and reporting accidents, incidents and ill health.
- Access to competent health and safety advice.
- Contracts are monitored to ensure compliance with contract standards and health and safety requirements.

SECTION eleven

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Contractor will be required to acknowledge that in carrying out its obligations under the Contract it will be acting on behalf of the Council and will comply with the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 as if it were the Council and will indemnify the Council against all actions costs, expenses, claims, proceedings and demands which may be brought against the Council for breach of statutory duty under the Act which arises from acts or omissions by the Contractor his servants and agents under the Contract.

SECTION twelve

DATA PROTECTION

The Contractor will be required to undertake to comply in all respects with the Provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and to indemnify the Council against all actions, costs, expenses, proceedings and demands which may be brought against the Council for breach of statutory duty under the Act which arises from the use, disclosure or transfer of personal data by the Contractor, their Servant or agent.

The Contractor shall agree that it shall not disclose any information obtained from the Council or any party beyond that which is necessary from the purposes of the Contract.

SECTION thirteen

INSURANCE

The Contractor will be insured to indemnify and keep indemnified the Council against injury to, or death of, any person or loss of, or damage to, any property arising out of any act, default, or negligence of the Contractors, its employees or agents, and against all actions, claims, demands, proceedings, damages, costs, charges or expenses whatsoever in respect thereof or in relation thereto.

Full details of the insurance required will be as specified in the Council's Constitution (available on the website www.staffordbc.gov.uk/live/welcome.asp?id=2918) or in the contract.

SECTION fourteen

HOW WE PAY OUR CONTRACTORS AND SUPPLIERS

Payment terms are normally set out in the contract documents, but they may be annual, quarterly, monthly payments or

payment on completion. Payment is normally within 30 days of receipt of a correct invoice, so to ensure that your payment is dealt with efficiently (and to avoid delays), we ask for the following:

- Submit the invoice in the format agreed in the contract or purchase order.
- Quote the order number and / or contract title.
- Address it to the correct officer and location.
- Ensure it adds up correctly.
- Include as much information as possible about what the payment is for.
- Only include requests for payment of supplied goods and services.

SECTION fifteen

CONTACT US

All organisations that bid for our contracts are entitled to feedback. We would encourage you to request feedback even if you are successful in bidding for work.

Similarly, we welcome feedback on this guide, on the procurement process or your experience of working with the Council.

Please contact us:

Telephone: 01785 619200

Email: drawlings@staffordbc.gov.uk

or write to us at:

Corporate Procurement
Stafford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Riverside
Stafford
ST16 3AQ

This Booklet can be made available on request in large print, for details please contact:

MR NORMAN JONES

or write to:

Telephone: 01785 619 200

Norman Jones

Email: npjones@staffordbc.gov.uk

Head of Policy and Improvement

Website: www.staffordbc.gov.uk

Civic Centre, Riverside

Stafford ST16 3AQ

Arabic

ولو كنت بحاجة إلى مزيد من المعلومات بخصوص هذا المنشور فيرجى الاتصال بمجلس بلدة ستافورد [Stafford Borough Council] على الرقم 01785 619 000 .

Hindi

यदि आपको इस प्रकाशन के बारे में अधिक जानकारी की आवश्यकता हो तो कृपया स्टैफोर्ड बरो परिषद [Stafford Borough Council] से 01785 619 000 पर संपर्क करें।

Punjabi

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਦੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਟੈਫੋਰਡ ਬਾਰੋ ਪਰਿਸ਼ਦ [Stafford Borough Council] ਨੂੰ 01785 619 000 ਉੱਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Urdu

اگر آپ کو اس اشاعت کے بارے میں مزید معلومات کی ضرورت ہو تو براہ کرم اسٹیفورڈ بروکونسل [Stafford Borough Council] سے 01785 619 000 پر رابطہ کریں۔