

Feedback Statement for Procurement Strategy 2007-2009 Consultation

Procurement Strategy 2007 – 2009

This is the first time a procurement document has gone out to consultation.

The main changes in this version of the strategy documents were that, for the first time engagement within the procurement process and sustainability considerations were included.

These were tentative but have led to a more robust exploration of these issues in the form of the Sustainable Procurement Strategy mentioned below.

The strategy will be approved 6th Sept at Council.

The Consultation ended on Friday 22nd June 2007. The document was requested by 20 organisations of which 4 returned a response.

Among the comments returned were the opinions that the strategy was well laid out, easy to read, comprehensive and inclusive.

In addition the following issues were raised which we feel require a specific response:

1. *'We would welcome an approach which procured services from suppliers who had a real commitment to skills and training...'*

We must work within the legal constraints of local and national government procurement rules. Social Return on Investment (SROI) Clauses are possible but to explore these pathways, implement them and create the cultural shift needed for success requires additional resources within the council's procurement department. These issues are being addressed as part of the development of a Sustainable Procurement Strategy.

2. *'If the VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) doesn't know what is up for tender, they can't bid for it!'*

A 'Fit to Bid' initiative is being developed in partnership with the RCVDA (Redcar & Cleveland Voluntary Development Agency) to help create links between the council and the VCS. For further information see below. Also see the contracts register on Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council website.

3. *'Please allow enough time for the VCS to react to tenders.'*

This has been addressed through the handbook review (see below). However, further resources and time will be required before full adoption.

4. *'E-procurement – not all VCS orgs are ready for this – some training may be required.'*

This will be incorporated into future development plans (see Fit to Bid Initiative below).

Meantime advice can be obtained for the Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council Procurement Team based at Redcar and Cleveland House, Kirkleatham Street.

5. *'There is...a need to acknowledge that we are where we are and there is a large and effective history in the VCS activity.'*

The strategy in no way means to undermine the work that has gone before. It is clearly due to this that the procurement department are now in a position to access the VCS and build on previous success.

Relevant Procurement Activities

Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council Procurement Handbook

This is due to be issued in November. It is being rewritten to include a flow process that incorporates an engagement period for all procurement opportunities. However, this will require a cultural shift and as a result may take some time to fully implement. This is part of the action plan of the Sustainable Procurement Strategy.

Dial a Ride Consultation and Tender Process

For the first time we have service users on the panel helping to develop and write the tender specification. In partnership with ROC, who are also on the tender panel, a consultation of all Dial a Ride members will be carried out in August and plans to consult with all Community Transport organisations in the area are being established.

It is expected that the tender will be ready to issue in September with a view to awarding the contract sometime in December/January 2008.

Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council Procurement Network Fit to Bid Initiative

This is a two-stage project. The business case and budget for stage one has been approved.

Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council will work in partnership with RCVDA to create a web based resource on procurement issues. It will be designed

initially to create links between the Strategic Procurement Unit of the RCBC and the VCS.

Initially it will be a source of information on procurement issues with a view to posting potential opportunities on the site, complimented by RCVDA email alerts to VCS organisations.

It is expected, once established, to be a spring board for future development for example future consultations around procurement, the development of a toolkit, training and workshop requirements.

For further information or comment contact:

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