

REVISED CONTRACTS STANDING ORDERS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 These Contract Procedure Rules (the Rules) provide a corporate framework for the procurement of all goods, services and works for the Council. The Rules are designed to ensure that all procurement activity is conducted with openness, probity and accountability. Above all, the Rules are designed to ensure that the Council obtains value for money and the required level of quality and performance in all contracts that are let. Every contract for the supply of goods and services and for the execution of works made by or on behalf of the Council shall comply with these Rules.

1.2 E-procurement procedures shall be used wherever possible. These include e-tendering, purchase cards and others. Where appropriate e-auctions may be used, so long as provision is made for this in the advert. Requests for quotations, Pre-qualification questionnaires and Invitations to tender should wherever practical be issued to tenderers by electronic means. Where e-tendering is being considered, the e-tendering software that is to be used must be the corporate e-tendering system. The Head of Shared Procurement Unit will provide User Names and Passwords for the corporate e-tendering system.

1.3 Before any tendering exercise is considered, reference must be made to the Council's procurement and equalities guidelines. The Council is committed to dealing fairly with all relevant discrimination group as defined in the Equalities Act 2010. A failure to take into account special requirements for these groups in a tender would be a significant corporate failure, affecting the reputation and standing of the Council.

1.4 Any employee who fails to comply with Contract Procedure Rules may be subject to disciplinary action.

1.5 The Council has produced a Procurement Toolkit which is available on the intranet. This should be adhered to by all officers engaged in procurement activity.

1.6 A Glossary of Terms is contained at Appendix 2.

2. COMPLIANCE WITH CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

2.1 The provisions contained in these Rules are subject to the statutory requirements of both the European Union and the United Kingdom. The letting and content of Contracts shall conform to all statutory requirements and be subject to any over-riding directives of the European Union relating to contracts and procurement. This Rule cannot be waived, since a failure to comply with European legislation may result in a legal challenge with consequent reputational

and financial risk. If you are uncertain, advice can be sought from the Head of Shared Procurement Unit or the Solicitor to the Council.

2.2 In estimating relevant contract values, officers shall have regard to the rules regarding aggregation. See Appendix A.

2.3 Partnerships

2.4 These Rules apply, in addition to other procurements, to any proposal for the Council to become involved in a joint venture or partnership, including the monitoring of any such arrangement. All procurements must also comply with Freedom of Information and Data Protection requirements.

In relation to the Rules, a joint venture or partnership includes any arrangement involving one or more organisations in addition to the Council through which either a specific project or services within any of the functions of the Council are to be provided. It will also provide a role for the Council or any of its members or officers in whatever structure is used to deliver the project or services involved (such structures may include, but are not limited to, companies, trusts and management committees).

2.5 Before any consideration is given to the Council entering into a joint venture with the private sector or a strategic service delivery partnership with any external organisation and in particular before any detailed negotiations are entered into or before any contract is made or undertaking given by or on behalf of the Council in relation to a joint venture or partnership, the Authorised Officer concerned must submit detailed information concerning the proposed joint venture or partnership to the Senior Officer. The Senior Officer will give consideration to the proposed joint venture in accordance with these Rules. On receipt of the detailed information above, the Senior Officer will ensure that an appropriate project board is convened. The Senior Officer will also ensure that appropriate consultation is made with the Senior Management Team and Cabinet.

2.6 Procurement processes for strategic partnerships and privately funded construction (PFI) projects must include:

- The issue of an information memorandum to prospective bidders setting out the background to the project, the Council's objectives and an outline of the procurement process and timetable, with roles and responsibilities made clear.

- An invitation to bidders to demonstrate their track record in achieving value for money through effective use of their supply chain, including the use of small firms; this should continue to be examined as part of contract management.
- The inclusion in invitations to tender (or take part in competitive dialogue) a requirement on bidders to submit optional, priced proposals for the delivery of specified social benefits which are relevant to the contract and add value to the community strategy.

3. NORMAL PROCEDURE

3.1 These Rules relate to five categories of procurement based on the estimated value of the contract:

- a. £1 to £1,000
- b. £1,001 to £5,000
- c. £5,001 to £50,000
- d. £50,001 to £EU Threshold
- e. Over the EU Threshold

3.2 In all instances, goods, services or works should be obtained via the methods outlined below :

- a. in-house services (for example, printing and design etc.)
- b. established corporate contracts or framework agreements
- c. request for quotation
- d. tender
- e. in the case of Constructionline, by running a mini-competition.
- f. framework contracts established by Purchasing Consortia or other Local Authorities (to be agreed by the Head of Shared Procurement Unit)
- g. for low-value purchases, Purchasing Cards can be used provided they are not used with the intention of undermining the use of approved or corporate contracts

All of the above options are subject to EU and/or UK Statutory requirements which must be complied with.

3.3 Orders and payments for goods, services and works shall be undertaken in accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules. In all cases,

the following wording must be included in tender and request for quotation documents:

“Information in relation to this tender may be made available on demand in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Tenderers should state if any of the information supplied by them is confidential or commercially sensitive or should not be disclosed in response to a request for information under the Act. Tenderers should state why they consider the information to be confidential or commercially sensitive. This will not guarantee that the information will not be disclosed but will be examined in the light of the exemptions provided in the Act.”

3.4 Before entering into a contract, the authorised officer must:

- a. Be satisfied that a specification (where appropriate) that will form the basis of the contract has been prepared (the specification should be retained on the appropriate contract file held within the service), and
- b. Have prepared and documented an estimate of the cost of the contract including, where appropriate, any maintenance and on-going costs (the estimate should be retained on the appropriate contract file held within the service), and
- c. For contracts where there is evident risk, and for all contracts over £50,000, produce and maintain a documented risk register for the procurement process and for the eventual contractual relationship. A risk register entry should be made and entered on the appropriate risk register. As a minimum this should analyse all risks, identify how the risks will be managed, and the responsible officer(s).
- d. For all contracts greater than £50,000 a draft contract should be produced to accompany the tender documents or contract terms and conditions.

3.5 Before entering into a contract the authorised officer must:

- a. Be satisfied about the technical capability of such proposed contractor and be satisfied that s/he has the power and authority to enter into the contract; and
- b. Ensure that all evaluation criteria have been determined in advance, put into order of relative importance with weightings for each element and published in the tender pack; and
- c. Ensure that these Rules have been complied with, and that the proposed contract represents value for money; and
- d. For all contracts that exceed £50,000, the authorised officer shall undertake appropriate checks to ensure that the proposed contractor has the financial and

resource capacity (taking account of contract value and risk) to perform the contract (unless the contractor has already been subjected to a recent satisfactory financial check). Financial vetting shall be undertaken by an officer designated by the Head of Finance and Revenues, who shall advise on what, if any, security should be provided by the contractor.

3.6. Advertising

All tenders shall be advertised and, where appropriate, be available for download on the website <http://www.sourcederbyshire.co.uk/>. Contract award notices shall also be published on the website.

3.7 Officers should consider whether the contract will be of benefit to other public sector bodies. If so they should include the following text in the advert ;

"Tenderers should be aware that although the contracting authority for the purposes of this procurement is Bolsover District Council, one or more other local authorities and/or public bodies from the Counties of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire may choose to access the concluded contract, without creating any obligation on behalf of any of them to do so."

3.8 All EU notices shall be referred, in advance of sending to the OJEU, to the Head of Shared Procurement Unit to advise on wording.

4.0 EXEMPTIONS

4.1 Subject to statutory requirements tenders need not be invited in accordance with these Rules in the following cases:

(a) In the case of the supply of goods:

(i) the goods or materials are proprietary articles and, in the opinion of the appropriate Senior Officer (which should be put in writing and retained on the project file), no reasonably satisfactory alternative is available, and

(ii) Exemptions under this rule shall be notified to the Head of Shared Procurement Unit.

(b) The work to be executed or the goods or services to be supplied are controlled by a statutory body.

(c) The work to be executed or the goods or services to be supplied constitute an extension to an existing contract and subject to the Senior Officer deciding

that it would not be in the interests of the service or the Council to tender the contract. The Senior Officer or his or her nominee should consult with the Head of Shared Procurement Unit who will ensure that a record of the decision is made on the project file.

(d) The contract is for the execution of work or the supply of goods or services certified by the appropriate Senior Officer to be required so urgently as to preclude the invitation of tenders. The appropriate Portfolio Holder shall be kept informed of such decisions and a record of the decision shall be retained by the service and a copy sent to the Head of Shared Procurement Unit.

(e) Or Commissioning, such as for the Working Neighbourhoods Funded projects where, for example, there is no (or insufficient) marketplace to tender for the supply of goods, services or works required.

4.2 Officers should consider using the Council's internal services where appropriate, or using established arrangements in Rule 3.2. Officers should ensure that the best possible balance of value for money and quality is obtained for the Council.

4.3 Tenders need not be invited where they have been undertaken by any consortium, collaboration or similar body, where the Council is able to access contracts. Officers should contact the Shared Procurement Unit to ensure that any contracts let by such a consortium, collaboration or similar body are in accordance with UK and EU procurement directives and regulations.

4.4 Where the Council acts as lead body on a consortium or collaborative arrangement, the procedures for tendering contained within these Rules shall be followed (including the delivery, opening and acceptance of tenders).

5. CONTRACTING & FINANCIAL GUIDELINES

5.1 Officers should order goods and services that are required through an arrangement illustrated in Rule 3.2. If however the Council or the consortium providing them do not have the goods or services or resources available to meet the reasonable needs of the service then an alternative supply may be sourced. In these circumstances the authorised officer must record why the goods or services have been procured through other means, and send a copy of the record to the Head of Shared Procurement Unit. In all circumstances a written purchase order is required.

5.2 It is good practice (for all but small value and routine purchases) to obtain a written quotation. The Procurement Toolkit at Appendix C shows the procurement route for the examples described below.

5.3 Contracts £1 to £1,000

Procurement of goods and services estimated to be for amounts up to £1000 shall be by oral or written quotation, unless an arrangement under 3.2 has already been established for the goods, services or works required. There is no mandatory procurement involvement.

5.4 Contracts £1,001 to £5,000

Procurement of goods and services estimated to be for amounts in the range £1,001 to £5,000 shall be by written quotation from at least three suppliers, unless an arrangement under 3.2 has already been established for the goods, services or works required. There is no mandatory procurement involvement.

5.5 Contracts £5,001 to £50,000

Procurement of goods and services estimated to be for amounts in the range £5,001 to £50,000 shall be by formal written request for quotation (RFQ) from at least three suppliers, unless an arrangement under 3.2 has already been established for the goods, services or works required.

5.6 Contracts £50,001 to EU Threshold

5.6.1 Procurement of goods and services estimated to be for amounts in the range £50,001 to EU THRESHOLD shall be by formal open Invitation to Tender (ITT), unless an arrangement under 3.2 has already been established for the goods, services or works required, whereupon mini competition will be encouraged with all capable suppliers. For evaluation purposes, a standing invitation to the evaluation meeting shall be made to officers from Finance, Legal and Audit along with the relevant Portfolio Holder or substitute and the appropriate commissioning officer.

5.6.2 In cases where the goods, services or works are covered by Constructionline, this list may be used provided that at least three written quotations are obtained (and more where, in the opinion of the Authorised Officer, there is a reasonable level of competition or variety of solutions). The use of Constructionline must be structured in order to ensure open and fair competition with an appropriate rotation of suppliers from the list.

5.7 Contracts EU Threshold and above

Procurement of goods and services estimated to be for amounts in the range EU THRESHOLD AND ABOVE shall be by formal open Invitation to Tender (ITT). Full procedural details are contained in Appendix D.

6. PROBITY

6.1 In every instance there shall be a record of the process. This shall be in accordance with the Procurement Toolkit and shall include the following, plus any information that may be required for submitting annual reports to the Government or other agencies:

- a. the officer(s) undertaking the procurement process and taking the decisions
- b. the rationale for the procurement route taken (including open or restricted procedure if above EU thresholds)
- c. a copy of the specification, risk register and anything required by Financial Regulations
- d. copies of all tenders & completed supplier questionnaire
- e. copy of the evaluation process and reasons for the decisions as to acceptance or rejection for every tender
- f. copy of the award letter and a copy of the relevant Executive Report and Minute
- g. copy of the final contract
- h. copy of the contract review and management process including the officer responsible for on-going contract management.

6.2 All contracts for goods, services and works must be registered on the Shared Procurement Unit Contracts Register and the original contract documents held centrally and securely in Legal Services.

6.3 Tenderers, whether successful or not, should be offered a debrief, to assist them in preparing future bids. The relevant officer should also keep a record of all debrief requests and responses.

6.4 In accordance with EC Procurement Directive 2004/18/EC, any company responding to an EU tender shall be excluded from the tender process if it, or its directors have been convicted of; conspiracy, corruption, bribery, fraud or money laundering. Where a service has information relating to the above, contact the Head of Shared Procurement Unit for advice.

6.5 BRIBERY ACT.

The Act makes it an offence to pay or receive a bribe, either directly or indirectly. The Act provides for transactions that take place both in the public and private sectors. Where a commercial organisation is convicted of such an offence there is provision within the Regulations for the commercial organisation to be barred from participating in tenders for public contracts. The Government intends to change this in amended Regulations to give a discretion to the public body seeking the tender as to whether such a commercial organisation should be so barred. Where there is evidence to suggest a breach of the Act or a conviction under the Act, officers should inform the Head of Shared Procurement Unit, Director of Resources and the Solicitor to the Council who will advise on a course of action.

7. RECEIPT AND CUSTODY

7.1 No tender will be considered unless it is either:

(a) Contained in a plain envelope which shall be securely sealed and shall bear the word 'TENDER' followed by the subject to which the tender relates or the number of the tender concerned, but shall not bear any distinguishing matter or mark to indicate the identity of the sender. Prospective tenderers shall be notified accordingly.

OR

(b) Received via the corporate e-tendering system.

7.2 Subject to 7.1,(a) tenders where the estimated value exceeds £50,000 shall immediately on receipt be consecutively numbered and remain in the custody of Democratic Services until the time appointed for opening. Any officer receiving tenders shall indicate on the envelope the date and time of its receipt by him or her.

7.3 Requests for quotation(RFQ) where the estimated cost does not exceed £50,000 may be addressed impersonally to the appropriate Senior Officer.

7.4 Responses to pre-qualification questionnaires (PQQs) and quotations(RFQ's) are not deemed to be tenders and should be returned to the originating officer, either via hard copy or electronically via email or e-tendering system.

8. OPENING AND EVALUATION OF TENDERS

8.1 Tenders shall be opened and recorded at one time and by not less than two officers designated for that purpose, as well as the designated Executive member and a Democratic Services officer.

8.2 Tenders submitted in hard copy must be opened by the same officers and Member and at the same time as documents received via any e – tendering system.

8.3 In respect of tenders with a value in excess of £50,000, any officer from the Finance, Legal or Internal Audit sections has the right to attend any tender opening.

8.4 Once opened, tenders shall be passed to the evaluation team which will include the relevant Portfolio Holder or substitute. A report outlining the results of the evaluation process will then be presented to Executive to decide on the award of the contract.

9. LATE TENDERS

9.1 Where a tender is submitted in competition and is received after the specified time then it shall be disqualified. This shall be subject to a test of reasonableness on the part of the Head of the Shared Procurement Unit and the Solicitor to the Council. Any such tender should be returned promptly to the tenderer who should be notified accordingly. The tender envelope may be opened to ascertain the name and address of the tenderer concerned.

10. ACCEPTANCE

10.1 Contracts shall be evaluated and awarded in accordance with the evaluation criteria issued with the tender documentation. Only those tenders that comply with the evaluation criteria shall be considered for acceptance. Tenders must be accepted on the basis of “most economically advantageous” tender.

10.2 A tenderer who submits a qualified or conditional tender shall be given the opportunity to withdraw the qualification or condition without amendment to the tender. If the tenderer fails to do so the tender must be rejected.

10.3 Prior to final contract award, the contractor must provide evidence of adequate insurance to cover both public and employers’ liability, and produce such evidence during the life of the contract at the reasonable request of the authorised officer.

10.4 For all procurements covered by the EU Directives, a statutory minimum period of 10 calendar days standstill time after the award decision is issued is required to allow companies an opportunity to challenge the decision.

The notification of the award decision to unsuccessful bidders, based on the most economically advantageous tender, should contain;

- the award criteria;
- the score the tenderer obtained against those award criteria;
- the score the winning tenderer obtained;
- the name of the winning tenderer.

10.5 All contracts must be notified to the Head of Shared Procurement Unit, including performance monitoring information.

11. NOMINATED/NAMED SUB-CONTRACTORS AND SUPPLIERS

11.1 It is recommended that contracts are awarded to a single entity or lead contractor, who in turn will take contractual responsibility for the performance (and risks) for all sub-contractors and supply-chains. This reduces the risk of the Council becoming party to disputes between contractors.

12. ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANTS

12.1 An authorised officer may only appoint external consultants or advisors providing professional or consulting services if such services are not available within the Council or if Council officers providing them do not have the resources to meet the needs of the service. Where such services are available in-house, the authorised officer must consult with a Senior Officer before taking any decision to make an external appointment.

12.2 Consideration should be given to using appropriate framework agreements for business, professional, and ICT consultancy services.

12.3 External consultants and technical officers engaged to supervise contracts must follow these Rules as applicable and their contracts for services must state this requirement.

12.4 Procurement plans and / or tenders prepared by external consultants on behalf of the Council **must** be referred to Head of Shared Procurement Unit for approval and advice.

12.5 The relevant officer is required to submit a Request for Service form (found on the intranet) to the Head of Shared Procurement Unit in respect of all consultancy and advisor contracts where the value of the contract is above £5,000.

12.6 All contracts for external consultants and advisors shall explicitly require that the consultants or advisors provide without delay any or all documents and records maintained by them relating to the services provided on request of the authorised officer, and lodge all such documents and records with the Authorised Officer at the end of the contract.

12.7 The authorised officer shall ensure that any consultant working for the Council has appropriate indemnity insurance.

13. CONTRACT CONDITIONS

13.1 Every contract for goods or services regardless of value shall be in writing and shall be based on the standard terms and conditions held by the shared Procurement Unit.

Every contract over £50,000 shall be in a form approved by the Senior Principal Solicitor or his nominee.

14. EXTENDING EXISTING CONTRACTS

14.1 The Authorised Officer, subject to the budget being available, and after consultation with the appropriate Senior Officer, may extend a contract subject to the extension being within the scope of the original scheme (subject to Rule 4.1.c).

14.2 If the original contract was subject to the EU procurement regulations, the contract can only be extended within the parameters identified in the original EU contract notice, or if the notice explicitly contained provision for extension.

15. PERFORMANCE BONDS AND GUARANTEES

15.1 In the case of all contracts valued above £50,000 the authorised officer shall determine, based on advice from the Director of Resources, the degree of

security (if any) required to protect the Council from a contractor default. This may be a performance bond or some other form of financial or performance guarantee.

15.2 Where an order is placed with a Council in-house service and work forming part of that order is sub-contracted to an external company, then the provisions of Rule 15.1 will apply.

15.3 Where a performance bond and/or parent company guarantee is required, then the tender documents must provide for this.

16. LIQUIDATED DAMAGES

16.1 Any contract which is estimated to exceed £100,000 in value or amount, and is for the execution of works, or for the supply of goods or materials by a particular date or series of dates, shall provide for liquidated damages. The amount to be specified in each such contract shall be determined by a Senior Officer in consultation with Legal Services and appropriate stakeholders.

17.1 Agreements shall be completed as follows:

Total Value	Method of Completion	By
Up to £50,000	signature	Solicitor to the Council
£50,001 and above	sealed	see 17.3

17.2 Signature

The Authorised Officer responsible for securing signature of the contract must ensure that the person signing for the other contracting party has authority to bind it.

17.3 Sealing

Where contracts are completed by each side adding their formal seal, the affixing of the Council's seal will be attested by the Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer together with the Chairman or in their absence, the Vice-Chairman of the Council, or in their absence, another Councillor. An entry of every sealing shall be made and consecutively numbered in a book kept for the purpose. The seal

must not be affixed without the authority of the Council, Executive, a Committee or under delegated powers. A contract must be sealed where:

- the Council may wish to enforce the contract more than six years after its end; or
- the price paid or received under the contract is a nominal price and does not reflect the value of the goods or services; or
- where there is any doubt about the authority of the person signing for the other contracting party; or
- the Total Value exceeds £50,000.

17.4 Archiving & lodgement of records

The original sealed contract must be deposited with the Council's Legal Services and recorded on the Contracts Register.