



Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



How to find opportunities and do business with Commercial & Procurement Shared Services

This document contains details on how we advertise our opportunities, what electronic tendering systems we use and how you can register to use them.

Introduction

The Commercial & Procurement Shared Service (C&PSS) is now formed of three council's procurement departments: Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and The Highland Council, the latter joined C&PSS in January 2017. Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and The Highland Council procure goods, works and services annually amounting to in excess of GBP £1 Billion - by procuring separately, collaboratively, or with other public sector bodies / local authorities. Depending on the strategic importance of the tender it will either be undertaken by the Service, or by the Commercial & Procurement Shared Service. Procurements are advertised and awarded via an e-tendering web portal called Public Contracts Scotland. A monthly contract's register is produced by each partner council showing all live contracts and is published on the relevant council's website.

How to get involved

To get involved you will need to register with the two main websites Commercial & Procurement Shared Services use for advertising opportunities: Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) and Public Contracts Scotland Tender (PCS-T).

Public Contracts Scotland	Public Contracts Scotland Tender
PCS is a great way to receive notifications of contract opportunities from Commercial & Procurement Shared Services, and it is not just us that uses it – it is also used by the wider public sector in Scotland	PCS-T is the Scottish national e-Tendering systems which are used for tender opportunities above quotation level, if PCS-T is being used the contract notice created in PCS will clearly state PCS-T and provide a link to the opportunity.
www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk	www.publictendersscotland.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk

Although PCS is the main website for advertising opportunities registration on both will be required to compete in tender opportunities.

Why Register?

- It's completely free to register on both PCS and PCS-T
- Complete the Supplier Finder Profile, make your profile visible and buying organisations on PCS will have visibility of your company - enhancing your chances of Quick Quote opportunities
- Interested in Sub-contracting opportunities? – it's a good tool to see what is happening in your area and identify potential sub-contracting opportunities
- You will be able to use the search facility 'browse notices' to see all published notices giving you the ability to contact the buyer if you find an opportunity you are interested in
- Complete the alerts profile and the system will automatically notify you of relevant opportunities
- If you don't register you can't participate!

Important Registration Tips

- Once registered be sure to verify your registration and complete the Supplier Finder Profile.
- Complete the alerts profile by selecting product categories relevant to your business and regions you cover and the system will automatically send alerts of relevant opportunities
- If you only register and don't set up the alerts profile you will NOT get automatic notifications of tender opportunities.

What are the current procurement routes to market for Commercial & Procurement Shared Services?

At present the three partner councils have different governance around the thresholds for procuring goods, services and works – the table below explains the current governance:

Council	Value	Action
Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire	Under £10,000 (Goods, Services & Works)	If a Contract or Framework Agreement is not already available, the spend is non-repetitive and where it is considered not cost effective to arrange a formal contract, competitive quotations must be sought and recorded in order to demonstrate best value. Quotations can be obtained via phone, email, internet search, and any other method that is deemed to be the most effective by the Delegated Procurer.
Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire	£10,000 – £50,000 (Goods, Services & Works)	If a Contract or Framework Agreement is not already available, a minimum of four (4) quotes to be obtained . Using the Quick Quote tool available via PCS, unless authorisation has been given by C&PSS for an alternative. Verbal quotes are not permitted. Procurers are recommended to invite a minimum of 6-8 companies to increase the likelihood of receiving 4 quotes.
Aberdeenshire	>£50,000 (Goods, Services & Works)	Open, restricted or negotiated tender opportunities are advertised on Public Contracts Scotland (PCS)
Aberdeen City	£50,000 - £250,000 (Works)	If a Contract or Framework Agreement is not already available, a minimum of four (4) quotes to be obtained . Using the Quick Quote tool available via PCS, unless authorisation has been given by C&PSS for an alternative. Verbal quotations are not permitted. Procurers are recommended to invite a minimum of 6-8 companies to increase the likelihood of receiving 4 quotes. At this level, regulations allow evaluation to proceed on the basis of “lowest tender price” although “most economically advantageous tender” (price + quality) is becoming increasingly common.
Aberdeen City	>£50,000 (Goods and Services) and >£250,000 (Works)	Open, restricted or negotiated tender opportunities are advertised on Public Contracts Scotland (PCS)
Highland	Under £5,000	If a Contract or Framework Agreement is not already available and the spend is non-repetitive, at least one quotation from a suitably qualified supplier must be requested.
Highland	£5,000 – £50,000 (Goods and Services) and <£2,000,000 (Works)	If a Contract or Framework Agreement is not available then the procurement process will be delegated to trained and authorised personnel. A Quick Quote must be conducted through PCS requesting at least three quotes from a suitably qualified supplier.
Highland	>£50,000 (Goods and Services) and >£2,000,000 (works)	Open, restricted or negotiated tender opportunities are advertised on Public Contracts Scotland (PCS)

Who can tender?

Tender opportunities are open to any supplier in both the UK and Europe (above OJEU threshold) who meet the criteria within the contract notice.

Do we always go out to the marketplace?

No, Commercial & Procurement Shared Services does not always go out to the marketplace to tender. National frameworks are used where appropriate and where they demonstrate best value. Frameworks are nationally procured, compliantly tendered multiple supplier contracts led by organisations such as: Scotland Excel, Scottish Government, Crown Commercial Services, Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO), amongst others (a list with links is contained further down this document). The partner councils can use these either by Call-Off, direct award or further competition - mini-competition. Mini-competitions will be undertaken between the suppliers appointed to the frameworks following the compliant tender. The Award Notice for any contract awarded by further competition will be published on PCS. All parties to a framework that provide the goods/works/services required at local level will be invited to participate in a mini-competition.

Why we use national frameworks?

National Frameworks are in place to ensure that as a Public Service we are gaining access to best value, by increasing the buying power across all Public Service organisations. They are normally created with multiple suppliers and multiple lots, to encourage SME's to participate. However, a supplier cannot be added to a framework during its lifecycle, therefore a supplier either needs to wait until the requirement is retendered (usually every 4 years) or contact organisations appointed to the framework and ask about further sub-contracting opportunities.

Here are links to some of the national framework websites:

Organisation	Website
Scotland Excel	www.scotland-excel.org.uk
Scottish Government	www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/Procurement/directory
Crown Commercial Services	www.gov.uk/government/organisations/crown-commercial-service
Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation	www.espo.org
Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation	www.ypo.co.uk
APUC	www.apuc-scot.ac.uk
LHC	www.lhc.gov.uk
SCAPE	www.scapegroup.co.uk
Bramble Hub (ICT Only)	www.bramblehub.co.uk

If you are interested in getting involved in some of these national frameworks, register on PCS for Scotland Excel, Scottish Government and APUC opportunities. For the rest please contact the organisations directly to see what web portals they use locally for procuring.

Links to the partner Council's current contract register:

Organisation	Website
Aberdeen City Council	https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/council-and-democracy/financial-information-and-procurement/contracts-register
Aberdeenshire Council	http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/business/procurement/
The Highland Council	https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/259/tenders_and_contracts/265/contract_opportunities