

PROCUREMENT FACTSHEET

Working with local suppliers

We are committed to giving all suppliers opportunities to compete for our contracts on a level playing field. We also want to take full advantage of the skills and enterprise available locally.

A diverse range of suppliers has much to offer by bringing increased competition for goods and services and supporting us in developing our commissioning intentions. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) providers often have a lower cost base, are more responsive and can offer a better quality of service.

We want any potential suppliers to work with us and tender for our requirements. We are keen to ensure that our procurement processes do not unreasonably prevent any type or size of supplier from bidding for our contracts and welcome feedback from suppliers. Our contracts are awarded on the basis of the best value to the authority, taking into account a range of qualitative and price factors.

Our approach to working with local suppliers:

We understand the issues faced by smaller organisations in finding and responding to public sector opportunities and try to respond positively within the fundamental principles of transparency, equal access and non-discrimination. Our approach to working with local suppliers, SMEs and VCS is:

- Using early market engagement to capture views from a wide cross section of potential suppliers and service users and thereby inform the development of service specifications and procurement strategy – where possible breaking down larger contracts into lots to encourage wider participation;
- Actively encourage local sub-contracting by our primary (Tier one) suppliers;
- Support sub-contracting wherever possible with opportunities for Tier one suppliers to meet potential sub-contractors;
- Use Open tendering on below threshold tenders in line with our [Procurement Rules](#);
- Work with representative bodies to develop best practice in commissioning and procurement;
- Ensure tenders are based on a clearly defined business needs and that the complexity of the process, evaluation criteria and timetable are appropriate;
- Publish with each tender, the evaluation criteria and process to be used;
- Make available through our website, a corporate register of all on-going contracts with contact details and a 'Plain English' guide to procurement and tendering processes;

- Ensure that when a contract is advertised: it appears on our [Suffolk Sourcing website](#), [Contracts Finder](#), and, depending on the value of the contract, [Find a Tender service](#);
- Ensure that all bidders are made aware of the opportunities for formal feedback on their tender submission after contract award.

Further support

There are several Business Support Agencies in Suffolk who can offer advice and information to new and small businesses:

- More information about [Business Services](#)

Voluntary and community organisations can find further information and guidance on our funding opportunities by following the link below:

- More information about [Funding](#)