

WALTHAM FOREST COUNCIL • REDBRIDGE COUNCIL



DOING BUSINESS WITH US



Working on behalf of



www.walthamforest.gov.uk • www.redbridge.gov.uk

1. INTRODUCTION

The London Boroughs of Waltham Forest and Redbridge operate a shared procurement service. This guide is designed to make it easier for businesses to work with us. It sets out some of the key procedures and policies that businesses need to be aware of when bidding for contracts with either Council.

We are committed to improving access to opportunities for businesses.

2. PROCUREMENT

Contracts are awarded according to financial and contract rules enshrined in each Council's constitution. These rules exist to ensure transparency and value for money in each organisation's contracting procedures.

The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Concession Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to procurement processes for contracts valued above certain thresholds ('PCR thresholds' – see section 3). These regulations set out specific procedures that all public sector organisations must follow when inviting bids and awarding contracts.

3. HOW WE BUY

All bids are invited via our e-tendering portal 'ProContract', which can be accessed at www.londontenders.org.

When seeking bids below PCR thresholds, we may either:

- directly invite a minimum number of suppliers to submit a quotation. In these cases, competition is therefore restricted only to those suppliers invited to bid; or
- openly advertise the opportunity, thereby allowing any supplier to express an interest.

Quotations are evaluated according to a range of price and/or quality criteria that are set out in a 'Request for Quotation' document.

When seeking bids above PCR thresholds, we will typically openly advertise the opportunity (unless using an existing arrangement such as a framework agreement). Details of a typical

tendering process above PCR thresholds are set out in section 4

The procurement process for a given contract is determined according to the total estimated value of that contract. These vary slightly across each Council.

Waltham Forest

- **Up to £10,000:** at least one quotation must be received. Where practicable, a quotation from a local supplier will be sought.
- **£10,001 to £50,000 (goods and services):** at least three quotes must be received. Where practicable, a quotation from a local supplier will be sought.
- **£10,001 to £500,000 (works):** at least three quotations must be received. Where practicable a quotation from a local supplier will be sought.
- **£50,001 to PCR Threshold (goods and services):** the opportunity will be openly advertised.
- **£500,001 to PCR Threshold (works):** the opportunity will be openly advertised.
- For contracts valued above PCR thresholds (£189,330 for goods and services/ £4,733,252 for works and concessions), opportunities will be openly advertised in [Find a Tender](#) and [Contracts Finder](#).

Redbridge

- **Up to £10,000:** at least one quote must be received. Where practicable, a quotation from a local supplier will be sought.
- **£10,001 to PCR threshold (goods and services)** at least three quotations must be received. Where practicable a quotation from a local supplier will be sought.
- **£10,001 to £500,000 (works):** at least three quotations must be received. Where practicable a quotation from a local supplier will be sought.
- **£500,001 to PCR Threshold (works):** the opportunity will be openly advertised.
- For contracts valued above PCR thresholds (£189,330 for goods and services/ £4,733,252 for works and concessions), opportunities will be openly advertised in [Find a Tender](#) and [Contracts Finder](#).

Procurement Policy and Strategy

Businesses seeking to do business with us should be aware of our Procurement Strategies, Procurement Policies and Supplier Charter, which are available online (see section 5).

When inviting bids for contracts above PCR thresholds, we will allocate a minimum 10% of the evaluation weighting to social value criteria. We require bidders to submit the social value element of their tender submissions via the online [Social Value Portal](#). To do this, bidders must register for free with the Social Value Portal.

4. PROCUREMENT PROCESSES ABOVE PCR THRESHOLDS

For more complex contracts we will aim to hold a market engagement event so that potential tenderers can better understand the opportunity and the anticipated procurement process.

There are five key stages to a typical procurement process above PCR thresholds:

1. Advertising and Shortlisting

The advertisement will give details of the proposed contract.

We may run a single stage process, or if we anticipate a high number of responses, we may run a two stage process, which enables us to shortlist respondents based on criteria such as financial standing, technical capacity and previous experience. Respondents may be asked at this stage to complete a Supplier Questionnaire ('SQ') and provide information about their organisation, such as:

- previous experience;
- insurance cover;
- financial statements;
- quality/training systems;
- health and safety policies;
- environmental policies and practices;
- equality policies and practices.

We will use this information to draw up a short-list of organisations to take to the next stage (Invitation to Tender). This will be done according to the criteria published in the SQ.

2. Invitation to Tender

If a respondent is successful in being shortlisted they will be sent an 'Invitation to Tender' (ITT), incorporating a number of documents that will need to be completed and returned to us electronically by a specified date. **The ITT will normally have been made available to bidders at the SQ stage for procurements above PCR thresholds.**

An ITT normally includes the following documents:

- Instructions to Tenderers – information on how a tender response should be completed and submitted.
- Form of Tender – confirms you are offering to supply the goods/ services/ works in accordance with the tender documentation.
- Certificate of Non-Collusion and Certificate of Non-Canvassing – confirms you are submitting a genuine competitive tender and have not colluded with anyone or canvassed any Council employee or member.
- Specification – a detailed technical description of our requirements.
- Evaluation criteria – details of how a tender will be evaluated and scored.
- Contract Conditions – the terms of the contract.

3. Preparing Your Response

When you receive your documents make sure you:

- Read the documentation carefully and you understand exactly what is required of you.
- Take the opportunity to raise queries as soon as possible and by no later than the permitted date.

When you answer the questions:

- Read the questions carefully and answer them accurately and precisely.
- Cross-reference the responses in your bid to the questions in the Invitation to Tender.
- Be clear on your pricing model and state any assumptions you have made when pricing (for example, resources required by you and/ or the Council, timetables, etc.).

- Always use the pre-formatted response documents provided (not your own), and don't make any alterations to the format or content of these documents except as instructed.
- Ensure you supply all requested attachments/ supporting information to enable your bid to be fully evaluated.
- Do not include publicity material in your submission (e.g. sales brochures, photography etc.) unless you have been asked to.
- If you cannot provide some of the information, for whatever reason, please ask for advice. If your answer to any question is 'no' or 'none', please state 'no' or 'none' rather than leaving the space blank.
- Do not assume that we know your business; we cannot use any pre-existing knowledge of you to evaluate your bid.

When you are ready to submit your bid, proof read your submission and make sure there are no mistakes or incomplete/missing responses.

4. Evaluation and Clarification of Bids

We will evaluate your bid in accordance with the evaluation criteria. These criteria will be the same as originally detailed in the Invitation to Tender. It may be necessary for us to seek clarification of your responses and someone will contact you in writing via the e-tendering portal if this is the case.

5. Contract Award

Contract award details will be issued in writing to all bidders via the e-tendering portal once the contract has been awarded. Details will also be published in Contracts Finder and Find a Tender (contracts above PCR thresholds only).

If you are unsuccessful and wish to seek feedback, you should contact the person named in the Invitation to Tender. We will be able to explain why your bid was unsuccessful and perhaps provide advice on how to improve your chances of success in future.

Contract Implementation and Management

Now the hard work begins! You will be expected to meet the service levels agreed in the contract and your progress will be monitored by a contract manager.

5. Useful links

The link to the Councils' e-tendering system (ProContract) is www.londontenders.org. Register there for free to ensure you receive alerts about contract opportunities in Waltham Forest, Redbridge and the wider Public Sector.

For guidance on how to register with ProContract, and to view copies of our Procurement Strategies, Procurement Policies and Supplier Charter, please visit the [Redbridge](#) and [Waltham Forest](#) websites.

For general enquiries, please write to us at info@PSProcure.co.uk.