

Selling to Epsom & Ewell Borough Council

A Guide to Suppliers 2012

Introduction:

This guide has been produced to assist organisations in applying and bidding for work from Epsom & Ewell Borough Council. It provides an insight into our tendering procedures and highlights the relevant legislation and Council policies that govern the procurement processes.

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council – profile

Epsom & Ewell lies to the north-eastern edge of Surrey, on the edge of London. Much of its northern area has the suburban characteristics of the adjoining London Boroughs of Kingston and Sutton, whereas the southern area is more rural, similar to the neighbouring district councils of Mole Valley and Reigate & Banstead.

The Borough is based on the market town of Epsom, the ancient village of Ewell and the centre at Stoneleigh. It is the smallest district in Surrey in both population (approximately 67,000 people and 28,500 households) and size (3,400 hectares). It is the most densely populated district in Surrey, and has the highest levels of traffic congestion of the Surrey districts.

At the same time, over half of the Borough is open space – much of it Green Belt – running around the built-up area and stretching southwards to the North Downs. Amongst the few outlying settlements is a cluster of five psychiatric hospitals – two have been redeveloped (Manor Park and Clarendon Park), one is in the process of being redeveloped (Livingstone Park); and the final two are due to be developed (the sites of St. Ebba's and West Park). These represent the last opportunity for large-scale development in the Borough.

Epsom Town Centre is the main shopping and business centre. The Borough has two business parks, and a major hospital. It also has a racehorse training industry and is home to the famous Epsom Derby horse race, with the sporting potential of the Downs was first recognised by Henry VIII back in the 1500s; and the Epsom Derby was staged for the first time in 1780.

The Borough also encompasses 35 parks and open spaces, one of which has recently acquired status as a site of special scientific interest.

Our procurement vision:

To support the delivery of best value, through the adoption of best practise in procurement and the management of contracts and supplier relationships, which contribute to delivering better quality public services to meet the needs of the community.

The Council operates a mixed provision of services with contracts and services being provided both in-house and externally by the private sector. The Councils approach when considering the make or buy decision is to focus on the service model that is most likely to achieve best value.

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The Council aims to encourage a mixed range of suppliers to compete for contracts to help develop a varied and competitive market place. This will include developing the participation by small firms and the voluntary and community sectors where appropriate.

What we buy

The Council procures a wide variety of goods, works and services to support the many front line services that it provides. Below is a list of typical purchases that we make, however the list is not exhaustive and is a guide only:

Goods: Computer hardware
 Computer software
 Stationary supplies
 Food
 Mobile phones
 Photocopiers
 Office furniture and equipment
 Vehicles
 Clothing

Works: Facilities Management
 Property maintenance
 Construction contracts
 Engineering
 Landscaping and grounds maintenance
 Tree Maintenance & surveying

Services: Consultancy (Various)
 Printing & Publicity
 Leisure Services
 Agency staff
 Advertising
 Training
 Insurance
 Utilities
 Catering

The Procurement regulations that we have to follow:

European Union Procurement Directives

These state that if a contract exceeds the relevant European Union thresholds (Works approx £4,300,000; Supplies or Services approx £170,000) we will have to advertise in the Official Journal of The European Union (OJEU), inviting expressions of interest to tender.

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The Directives also set the timescales and detailed tender procedures that we have to follow. These rules aim to ensure open and non-discriminatory competition across the European Union.

Council Contract Standing Orders

These regulate how we conduct our business and anyone employed by the Council (all staff and including consultants) must conform to them. They set out the procedures for advertising, evaluating and letting contracts of different values and are part of the Councils' constitution.

Freedom of Information Act

This legislation came into force on 1st January 2005 and entitles all members of the public to access information held by public authorities in any form. The Council must advise and help anyone who has made or is thinking of making a request for access. All suppliers must be aware of this duty, which may require us to disclose tender and contract information.

If you consider that any information that you provide to us is commercially sensitive and you would not wish us to disclose it, you must advise us of this when returning your tenders to us. You will need to identify which information in your bid is commercially sensitive and explain (in broad terms) what harm may result from disclosure if a request is received and the time period applicable to that sensitivity. You should be aware that, even where you have indicated this information is commercially sensitive, we may be required to disclose it under the Act if a request is received.

How we decide the tender process

The estimated value of a contract will determine the tender procedure we follow, including how many tenders we need to invite, how we advertise and what checks we make. The value of a contract is calculated on the estimated annual value multiplied by the number of years of the contract term. This is set out in the table below:

Type	Contract Value	Minimum number of Tenderers	Do we advertise the contract?
All	£0 to £5,000	No minimum number	No
All	£5,000 - £75,000	3	No
All	Over £75,000	4	Yes
Services & Supplies	Over £173,934	As per EU Procedures	Yes - OJEU
Works	Over £4,348,350	As per EU Procedures	Yes - OJEU

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How to find out about contract opportunities

The Council Contract Register, published on the website, indicates the programme of regular procurement and associated renewal dates. The Contract Register is the best source for keeping up to date with recurring contract opportunities.

Certain procurements of a high value may need to be advertised and we will publish in least one local, national and / or trade newspaper, and in specialised and trade journals if appropriate. We also advertise tenders over £75,000 on our website at www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk and on www.businessportal.southeastiep.gov.uk

Procurement requirements above the EU threshold for the relevant type of contract, it will be advertised in the Official Journal of The European Commission in addition to the other publications detailed above. The journal is only available via the internet (www.ted.europa.eu).

The advertisement will summarise the service we require, the relevant timescales and deadlines, and will ask for expressions of interest.

We may also send copies to contractors/suppliers we expect might be interested in the contract.

Collaboration & Partnerships

Where appropriate Epsom & Ewell Borough is keen to work with other local authorities to maximise economies of scale and deliver cost efficiencies. The Council is a member of the Surrey Procurement Group which has an aim to identify opportunities for joint contracting and collaboration between authorities on procurement.

Being selected to tender

If you are interested in tendering for a contract you need to express your interest. The majority of our tenders are issued through a restricted procedure, which calls for expressions of interest to be registered through a completed pre-qualification questionnaire (PQQ). PQQs for each specific tender opportunity will be available to download and complete on our website.

This questionnaire will request details on your company profile, financial standing (including last set of annual accounts), track record, ability to provide the service and where appropriate statements on quality management systems, health & safety, sustainability and equal opportunities. The information provided on these questionnaires is used to short-list contractors for tendering. Tender documents will only be sent to those contractors that are short-listed.

If you are invited to tender it is important that you follow all instructions about what you need to include and how to return the tender, to avoid disqualification. The tender must be submitted on time, as no extensions will normally be allowed.

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Who can submit a tender?

For all contracts, regardless of value, a contractor must be selected who:

- can confirm a business contact address and telephone number
- has an acceptable level of public liability insurance (and where appropriate, other necessary insurances)
- is registered for tax and holds a valid certificate (where appropriate)
- is able to provide two independent referees from whom reference may be sought for contracts completed within the last three years
- complies with the relevant industry standards.

Select List for maintenance of buildings and construction works

Please note that the Council uses Constructionline accreditation services for vetting suitable contractors for building maintenance and construction works under £50,000 in value. If you wish to be considered for building maintenance or construction projects under £50,000 in value you must be registered and assessed by Constructionline in order to be selected for any tender opportunities.

Evaluation of tenders:

Once received, all tenders will be kept securely until the closing date. They will be opened together, in the presence of Officers and/or Councillors depending on the value. Details of the contractor and the value of the tender will be recorded in a register.

The Council will assess contracts on the value for money they offer and award contracts on the basis of best value rather than lowest price. Best value is defined as “the optimum combination of whole life costs and benefits to meet the customer’s requirement”. The Council will assess the whole life costs to the Council of acquiring, owning, maintaining and disposing of goods, services or works. The specific evaluation criteria to be used for each purchase will be clearly indicated in the tender documents issued.

Policy Considerations

Health and safety

Contracts will only be awarded to contractors who can satisfy the Council’s requirements in terms of health and safety competence, and that can demonstrate compliance with health and safety legislation.

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Equal opportunities

The Council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity irrespective of sex, age, race or disability. We will ensure that our contracts are delivered in a way that is non-discriminatory. We expect all of our suppliers to have equal opportunity policies in place, and to comply with all current legislation and the codes of practice issued by equality commissions.

Sustainability

The Council is committed to addressing the environmental impact of procurement activities and where appropriate will use sustainability factors when selecting contractors and evaluating tenders.

E-Procurement

The Council utilises the Government Purchasing Card (VISA purchasing card), to purchase low value and recurring goods and services. We are therefore looking to work with contractors who are able to take this card, to streamline the ordering and payment processes.

Our Promise to you

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council promises to treat each supplier, prospective supplier and enquirer with fairness and respect. We will:

- Maintain our integrity throughout the procurement process
- Follow a fully auditable process that is compliant with public procurement legislation
- Give feedback to unsuccessful bidders on request following award of a contract

Contacting the Council

The Council has a central procurement and projects team that is responsible for developing procurement policy and skills across the Council and also for letting and managing the majority of our contracts and building projects.

Please note that we do not operate formal select lists or preferred lists of contractors with the exception of building maintenance and construction projects which are managed through Constructionline accreditation services (as detailed earlier).

If you wish to apply for a specific tender, please follow the instructions on the relevant advertisement. If you wish to provide generic details about your company for future opportunities, please write to the following address and we may (if appropriate) hold your details on file until a future opportunity arises.

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However we would recommend that contractors and suppliers keep up to date on future opportunities through the Council website and apply for specific tenders rather than sending in generic company information.

General Enquiries:

Mr Doug Earle
Head of Procurement & Projects
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council
Town Hall
The Parade
Surrey
KT18 5BY

Email: <mailto:dearle@epsom-ewell.gov.uk>

Enquiries on registering with Constructionline:

Mr Tony Foxwell
Building Surveyor
Procurement & Projects Dept
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council
Town Hall
The Parade
Surrey
KT18 5BY

Email: afoxwell@epsom-ewell.gov.uk