



# HOW TO DO BUSINESS WITH NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL



**INVEST HERE**

**1.1** The council welcomes interest and competition in our contract opportunities from all businesses. We have an ambitious plan for North Lanarkshire, and we appreciate the innovation and expertise that can be procured from the supply base to help us meet our objectives.

**1.2** Suppliers who are seeking access to our contract opportunities are encouraged to register on:

- the national advertising platform [Public Contracts Scotland Portal](#) ("PCS") and,
- the national e-Tendering system [PCS-Tender](#).

***These online platforms provide automated notifications to suppliers (based on their business areas they have matched their profile to) providing alerts when the council advertise open opportunities. These platforms facilitate our competitive quotations or tenders.***

**1.3** The council has a [buyer portal](#) that sits within PCS. This is a public resource that acts as an online directory featuring links to:

- the council's [contract register](#);
- displaying notices for our open contract opportunities; and
- displaying notices of our previous contract awards.



- 1.4** The council's [contract register](#) holds current contract details that allows potential suppliers browsing to determine opportunities i.e. when current contracts expire and when the council is likely to re-tender.
- 1.5** The council produces an [Annual Procurement Report](#) which has a dedicated section setting out the expected contract opportunities for suppliers to get involved in over the next 2 financial years.
- 1.6** Between the council's [contract register](#) and [Annual Procurement Report](#), suppliers can learn much about what the council needs, and prepare for relevant opportunities. The council is open to proposals that feature subcontracting and consortium bids that can meet any stated requirements.
- 1.7** Further links to the council's procurement activity and publications can be found on our website, please visit [www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/business/procurement](http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/business/procurement).
- 1.8** For construction projects, in progress or coming soon, the council provide additional updates on our activity through the "*Scottish Pipeline Forecast Tool*" see site [www.pipeline.scottishfuturestrust.org.uk](http://www.pipeline.scottishfuturestrust.org.uk). This acts as a further resource that may be of assistance to potential suppliers looking for subcontract opportunities.



- 1.9** The corporate procurement team and procuring officers across the council's Service Areas support the Lanarkshire and National "*Meet the Buyer*" events, which are the key networking days where our procuring officers can liaise with potential suppliers looking to promote their services and/or learn how to optimise their profiles on [Public Contracts Scotland portal](#) (which tends to be a key supplier directory for procuring officers, particularly for quotations).
- 1.10** In addition to liaison with the council, the [Supplier Development Programme \("SDP"\)](#) offers independent support and training to businesses that are seeking help / guidance with public sector contracting opportunities. The council works in co-operation with SDP including making referrals, especially where there is a change in tender process. We have [successful exemplars](#) of this approach working well in the past.



**1.11** Suppliers may find it helpful to consider the “*Supplier Journey*”. [www.supplierjourney.scot/](http://www.supplierjourney.scot/)

**1.12** For awareness, the council’s contract opportunities below £50,000 Supplies/Services or below £2,000,000 Works are not subject to the procurement regulations. These procurement procedures are conducted in a manner which represents best value.

**1.13** Generally procuring officers undertaking non-regulated procurements will source their requirements through either:

- Using an already established Framework Agreement i.e. [Scotland Excel / National Frameworks / Crown Commercial Services Frameworks](#); or
- Undertaking a competitive quotation exercise.

The Council’s full procurement procedures are set out in our [General Contract Standing Orders \(“GCSOs”\)](#).

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

## What is public sector procurement?

Public sector bodies, such as the council, are financed by public money that is raised from taxes. Public sector procurement is where the council then buys goods or services. The goals are to make sure that contracts are awarded to qualified suppliers to support public operations, in accordance with the public procurement rules.

## What makes public sector procurement different from private sector procurement?

Public bodies are bound by a wide range of regulations, legislation, and there is an absolute requirement to ensure best value. The budget or estimated value of a requirement determines which governance needs to be adhered to within the procurement approach, including any statutory or general duty that must be taken into consideration.

## How does the council procure its supplies, services and works?

The value of the requirements dictate if the procurement is Regulated or Non-Regulated, and the applicable rules that need adhered to. Once the governance is determined, the council can then consider from a range of approaches that can secure best value including:

- open advertisement of a tender opportunity via [public contracts Scotland portal](#)
- quotations exercise (for which suppliers may be invited based on information within their PCS profiles)
- call-off from an existing 3rd party collaborative Framework, e.g.
  - [Scotland Excel](#)
  - [Scottish Procurement](#)
  - [Crown Commercial Services](#)

Note that suppliers may be interested in applying / tendering to become part of these frameworks.

## Does the council have an approved supplier list?

No, the council do not operate an approved supplier list.

## Can I meet with the council and/ or the buyer regarding a contract opportunity that interests my business?

In most circumstances this will not be possible as there are rules surrounding pre-tender bidder engagement: Scottish Procurement Regulations do not generally permit informal discussions. However, the council may hold formal pre-tender market engagement events or one to one discussion with potential bidders where these can be formally documented and, in some cases, be declared in the tender documentation.



### **How do you decide who receives a contract?**

The most prevalent evaluation approach is using a 'most economically advantageous tender' scoring model, considering Price and Quality in a ratio that will be transparently set out in the tender documentation. The tenderer with highest score will be recommended for contract award, subject to the council completing its due diligence, which can include seeking evidence, assurances and completion of any necessary tenderer checks i.e. financial and non-involvement in serious organised crime.

### **I competed for a contract but was unsuccessful. Do you have any advice?**

For all tenders and quotations, the council can offer structured feedback on the tender evaluation results, but there are limits to this.

Where the procurement regulations apply, there is prescribed feedback that should be provided. To an unsuccessful tenderer for instance, the feedback should reference the criteria for contract award, include the name of the successful tenderer, include the characteristics and relative advantages of the successful tender, and include a summary of reasons why they were unsuccessful. In a non-regulated procurement, the council is not obligated to share the same level of feedback, but the council shall endeavour to provide what it can on a fair and equal basis.

### **What are the council's payment terms?**

The council operate in line with the national "*prompt payment*" objective to pay suppliers and subcontractors within 30 days, and this is set out in our general terms and conditions.

## Why is procurement important in public sector?

Public sector procurement allows public organisations to maximise output. As funds have come from public taxes or other grants, it's important that public procurement ensures that the funds are managed in a way that demonstrates value for money, as well as accountability. The executive board of the public sector organisation is responsible for the handling of the procurement functions and activities. The aim of public sector procurement is to provide public services and support government operations at all levels within a country.

## What are the differences between public procurement and private procurement?

Public and private procurement have some fundamental differences. Those being the purpose, funding, regulations, scrutiny, and management. Look below at the major differences in procurement between private and public procurement.

### **Purpose of procurement:**

The purpose of public and private procurement is different. Private sector procurement supports business objectives of the organisation, designed to make a profit. In the public procurement sector, the main reason for acquiring goods is to support government operations and to provide public services. Although private sector can also support social benefits, it doesn't tend to be their primary business objective.

### **Sources of funding:**

Funding is another key difference between public and private procurement. Private sector procurement activity is funded by the company itself through owners and shareholders. However, public procurement is funded through taxes, grants and loans obtained by the government.

### **Regulations:**

Public sector procurement is governed by public procurement rules. The rules set out the process of managing procurement and the methods that are permitted. Private sector procurement complies with contracts and commercial law, with methods of procurement only governed by internal policies.

### **Scrutiny:**

As the public sector is funded by public money, public procurement can face bigger scrutiny due to the public sector procurement rules.

### **Management:**

Private sector procurement professionals answer to a management reporting line and are solely responsible for their actions. Public sector procurement professionals are public servants, so are directly accountable if they fail to manage public funds.

[www.cips.org/intelligence-hub/procurement/public-sector](http://www.cips.org/intelligence-hub/procurement/public-sector)



For further information and helpful links to additional resources, please scan the QR code.